

**Department of Planning and Budget**  
**2026 General Assembly Session**  
**State Fiscal Impact Statement**

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**PUBLISHED: 2/3/2026 9:14 AM**

**ORIGINAL**

**Bill Number:** HB1237

**Patron:** Sewell

**Bill Title:** Cemeteries; maintenance of abandoned or neglected graveyards; owner unknown.

**Bill Summary:** Permits the owner of adjacent land or an incorporated nonprofit entity to petition the circuit court for an exclusive license to maintain a graveyard that has been abandoned, is unused and neglected by the owner, and the owner of such graveyard is unknown, or cannot with reasonable diligence be found. The bill requires the petitioner to (i) demonstrate a good faith effort to identify and contact an owner of record of the graveyard and (ii) publish, in a newspaper having general circulation in the locality in which the graveyard is located once a week for two consecutive weeks, notice that a petition for a maintenance license has been filed. The bill allows a court to grant a petitioner an exclusive license for the maintenance of an abandoned graveyard not to exceed five years. Such petitioner may, by petition of the court, renew such license indefinitely. After the court grants a petitioner a license to maintain the property, the owner of such graveyard may petition the circuit court of the county or city in which the graveyard is located to terminate the license.

**Budget Amendment Necessary:** No                    **Items Impacted:** None

**Explanation:** There is no anticipated fiscal impact from the bill.

**Fiscal Summary:** According to the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) of the Supreme Court of Virginia, there is no anticipated fiscal impact from the bill.

**Fiscal Analysis:** Any unanticipated costs that may arise from the bill are expected to be absorbable with existing resources.

**Other:** None .