

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Historic Cemeteries Program;
3 amending s. 267.21, F.S.; requiring local governments
4 to approve applications from historic African-American
5 cemeteries to change the land use category and zoning
6 district of excess vacant land under certain
7 conditions; providing an effective date.
8

9 WHEREAS, the State of Florida recognizes the work done by
10 the University of South Florida's Black Cemetery Network to
11 reclaim black histories that have been underrepresented, to
12 redress the exploitation and erasure of these African-American
13 cemeteries due to urban redevelopment and land use practices,
14 and to restore dignity to these cemeteries and honor the
15 deceased, and

16 WHEREAS, the Black Cemetery Network has identified and
17 registered 35 sites in Florida, and

18 WHEREAS, the Legislature passed House Bill 49 during the
19 2023 Regular Session, and it was signed into law by the Governor
20 on May 25, 2023, creating the Historic Cemeteries Program, and

21 WHEREAS, the Historic Cemeteries Program provides grants to
22 eligible cemeteries for preservation efforts; however, some of
23 these cemeteries have vacant land that could be sold to help
24 fund the long-term maintenance and upkeep of such cemeteries,
25 ensuring that the grants are used for the initial preservation

26 efforts of these cemeteries, NOW, THEREFORE,

27
28 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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30 **Section 1. Present subsection (3) of section 267.21,**
31 **Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (4), and a new**
32 **subsection (3) is added to that section, to read:**

33 267.21 Historic Cemeteries Program.—

34 (3) If a historic African-American cemetery with excess
35 vacant land sells or enters into a contract to sell such land
36 for the express purpose of funding the cemetery's long-term
37 maintenance and upkeep, the local government where such cemetery
38 is located must approve an application to change the land use
39 designation and zoning of such land to match the most permissive
40 land use category and zoning district adjacent to the excess
41 property.

42 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.