

CHAPTER 533

(House Bill 1250)

AN ACT to add new Sections 312A through ~~312R~~ 312Q, inclusive, to Article 23 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1966 Replacement Volume), title "Corporations," subtitle "Religious Corporations," to follow immediately after Section 312 thereof, to be under the new subheading "Protestant Episcopal Church—Diocese of Washington," to provide generally for the Protestant Episcopal Church—Diocese of Washington, to reflect in said Article the provisions of Chapter 24 of The Acts of 1798, known as The Vestry Act, and the amendments thereof, as applicable to the Parishes of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Washington in Charles, St. Mary's, Prince George's and Montgomery counties; and relating generally to the organization, administration and control of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Washington.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That new Sections 312A through ~~312R~~ 312Q, inclusive, be and they are hereby added to Article 23 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1966 Replacement Volume), title "Corporations," subtitle "Religious Corporations," to follow immediately after Section 312 thereof, to be under the new subheading "Protestant Episcopal Church—Diocese of Washington, said sections to include in the Annotated Code of Maryland, the provisions of Chapter 24 of the Acts of 1798, known as The Vestry Act, and the amendments thereto, and to read as follows:

Protestant Episcopal Church—Diocese of Washington

312A.

The vestries shall be chosen for each parish within this Diocese in the following manner:

Every member of the parish who shall have been entered on the books of the parish as a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, at least one month preceding the day of parish election, shall have the right of suffrage for the election of vestrymen at the annual meeting of such parish and for all other matters which may duly come before the parish at any annual or special meeting. In the case of a newly organized parish, the right of suffrage shall extend to all members of the new congregation for the election of the initial vestry and the adoption of by-laws. Additional qualifications for suffrage not inconsistent herewith, if any, shall be contained in by-laws adopted in accordance with the provisions of (a) hereof, provided that the age of all voters shall not be less than 18 years of age.

(a) The parishes and separate congregations of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Maryland may by by-laws provide for the time, place, and manner of calling the annual meeting and all special meetings of the parish and the manner of conducting elections of vestrymen, the number of vestrymen to be elected, and all special meetings of the parish and the manner of conducting elections of vestrymen, the number of vestrymen to be elected, and the length of the terms of the offices of vestrymen. Such by-laws may be adopted at any annual meeting or special meeting of members of the parish or congregation by a vote of two-thirds of the qualified voters present