

**From:** [Arellano, Joey](#)  
**To:** [Press](#)  
**Subject:** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Rep. Driskell Responds to the Discovery of 45 Unmarked Cemeteries Throughout Tampa Bay  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 4:36:44 PM

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 16, 2022

**CONTACT:**

Lucile Malone  
Office of Representative Fentrice Driskell  
[Lucile.Malone@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Lucile.Malone@myfloridahouse.gov)  
(850) 717-5063

**Representative Fentrice Driskell Responds to the Discovery of 45 Unmarked Cemeteries Throughout Tampa Bay**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Representative Fentrice Driskell (D-Tampa)** responds to new discoveries of 45 unmarked cemeteries throughout Tampa Bay.

The Florida Institute of Forensic Anthropology and Applied Science at the University of South Florida discovered 45 unmarked cemeteries throughout Tampa Bay. 14 of these unmarked cemeteries are African American cemeteries.

“The recent discovery of 45 unmarked cemeteries is a reminder that our work to preserve history and bring dignity to the deceased is just beginning,” said **Representative Fentrice Driskell**. “I am proud of the efforts we are making at the state level to address abandoned cemeteries, and specifically African American cemeteries that were neglected, stolen, or abandoned. This is a pervasive, statewide issue that requires the State to partner with local communities, and it is an honor to carry [HB 1215](#) this legislative session to create an Office of Historic Cemeteries within the Department of State’s Division of Historical Resources. If passed, my legislation would establish this office to protect and preserve abandoned and forgotten cemeteries and to serve as a nexus among state and local governments, which is needed now more than ever.

###

State Representative Fentrice Driskell represents Florida House District 63, which is located in Hillsborough County and includes the Tampa-area communities of Carrollwood, Lake Magdalene, Lutz, University, New Tampa, and Pebble Creek.