

March 1, 2024

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy and Environment Committee

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Health and Government Operations Committee

Maryland General Assembly
State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **HB 1168 / SB 1028 – The Green Death Care Options Act**

Dear Chair Feldman and Char Pena-Melnyk:

I am writing to urge your committees for a favorable report on the Maryland Green Death Care Options Act.

In November of 2022, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, I held my Father's hand as he died from metastatic bone cancer. Before he lost his ability to speak, I got a chance to talk to him about how he wanted to be remembered and how he wanted his remains to be handled. The ways to honor his memory and remains were slim and I knew I had to be sure his legacy lived on in ways that kept on giving back. He was an advocate for the underdog and dripped with kindness and compassion. We donated his remains and made an investment to cancer research, but if given the option, I would have loved to preserve his remains another way. I believe there is no reason that natural organic reduction and water cremation should be withheld from Maryland families. Water cremation and NOR should be options for people who are committed to a greener lifestyle before death because the environmental impact of conventional funerals is entirely avoidable with these better death care options. Now that so many other states have proven the science and reliability of these options, Maryland can have no excuse for lagging behind.

Please step up to support this legislation because it's the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Kameaka Graves
Bowie, Maryland