
By: Delegates Morhaim, Finifter, Bobo, Kittleman, Holt, Frank, and M. Burns

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 1996

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral Industry**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and
4 Funeral Industry; specifying the responsibilities of the Task Force; requiring the
5 Task Force to report to certain persons by certain dates; and generally relating to
6 the Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral Industry.

7 Preamble

8 WHEREAS, The estimated average funeral cost is \$4,470, an amount which is often
9 a burden for many families in the State; and

10 WHEREAS, It is essential that consumers in this State be afforded certain
11 protections and guaranteed certain rights; now, therefore,

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 MARYLAND, That:

14 (a) There is a Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral Industry.

15 (b) The Task Force consists of the following 17 members:

16 (1) 2 Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates;

17 (2) 2 Senators appointed by the President of the Senate; and

18 (3) 13 members appointed by the Governor as follows:

19 (i) 1 representative of Health and Mental Hygiene;

20 (ii) 1 representative of Human Resources;

21 (iii) 1 licensed physician;

22 (iv) 1 representative of the Office on Aging;

23 (v) 2 licensed morticians;

24 (vi) 1 representative of the cemetery industry;

25 (vii) 1 representative of the hospice industry;

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1 (viii) 1 representative of the Attorney General's Office; and

2 (ix) 4 members at large.

3 (c) The Governor shall designate the Chairperson of the Task Force.

4 (d) Staff support for the Task Force shall be provided by the Department of
5 Legislative Reference.

6 (e) The purposes and responsibilities of the Task Force are to:

7 (1) assess:

8 (i) the regulation of the funeral industry in this State and other states;

9 (ii) the costs to consumers of funeral merchandise, including caskets,
10 cremations, and burial plots; and

11 (iii) the costs to the State and local governments for the burial of
12 indigent individuals;

13 (2) develop recommendations for methods to:

14 (i) reduce costs to consumers of the funeral industry;

15 (ii) increase consumer involvement and awareness with the funeral
16 industry;

17 (iii) encourage consumers to make decisions concerning burial before
18 the need arises; and

19 (iv) disseminate information to consumers about the available goods,
20 services, and prices; and

21 (3) propose legislative, regulatory, and other changes required to implement
22 the recommendations.

23 (f) (1) On or before January 1, 1997, the Task Force shall submit an interim
24 report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

25 (2) On or before January 1, 1998, the Task Force shall submit its final report
26 to the Governor and the General Assembly.

27 (g) The Task Force shall terminate on January 1, 1998.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
29 October 1, 1996.