

---

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

Introduced and read first time: January 24, 1996

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

Reassigned: Economic Matters, January 31, 1996

---

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: March 20, 1996

---

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

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 purposes and responsibilities of the Task Force;  
5 requiring the Task Force to report to certain persons by certain dates; providing for  
6 the composition of the Task Force; providing for the effective date of this Act; and  
7 generally relating to the Task Force to Examine the State's Cemetery and Funeral  
8 Industry.

9 Preamble

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

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

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
15 MARYLAND, That:

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

17 (b) The Task Force consists of the following ~~47~~ 25 members:

18 (1) ~~2~~ 3 Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates;

19 (2) ~~2~~ 3 Senators appointed by the President of the Senate;

20 (3) the Secretary of State or Secretary of State's designee; and

2

1 ~~(3)~~ (4) 18 members appointed by the Governor as follows:

2 (i) 1 representative of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene;

3 (ii) 1 representative of the Department of Human Resources;

4 (iii) 1 licensed physician;

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

6 (v) ~~2~~ 3 licensed morticians, one of whom shall be a small proprietor;

7 (vi) ~~4~~ representative 3 representatives of the for-profit cemetery  
8 industry, one of whom shall be a resident cemetery owner;

9 (vii) 1 representative from a nonprofit cemetery;

10 ~~(vii)~~ (viii) 1 representative of the hospice industry;

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

12 (x) 1 representative from the Department of Labor, Licensing, and  
13 Regulation; and

14 ~~(ix)~~ (xi) 4 members at large.

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

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

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

19 (1) identify small businesses in the funeral and burial industries;

20 ~~(1)~~ (2) assess:

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

22 (ii) the costs to consumers of funeral merchandise, including caskets,  
23 cremations, and burial plots; ~~and~~

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

26 (iv) interest rates and financing charges in the burial industries;

27 (v) the issues facing small businesses in the funeral and burial  
28 industries;

29 (vi) the religious needs of various consumers as they relate to burial  
30 practices; and

31 (vii) the reinterment of remains that are discovered in the development  
32 of property;

33 ~~(2)~~ (3) develop recommendations for methods to:

3

- 1 (i) reduce costs to consumers of the funeral industry;
- 2 (ii) increase consumer involvement and awareness with the funeral  
3 industry;
- 4 (iii) encourage consumers to make decisions concerning burial before  
5 the need arises; ~~and~~
- 6 (iv) disseminate information to consumers about the available goods,  
7 services, and prices; ~~and~~
- 8 (v) educate the funeral and burial industries about the religious needs  
9 of consumers as they relate to burial practices; and
- 10 (vi) properly reinter the remains of individuals discovered in the  
11 development of property; and
- 12 ~~(3)~~ (4) propose legislative, regulatory, and other changes required to  
13 implement the recommendations.
- 14 (f) (1) On or before January 1, 1997, the Task Force shall submit an interim  
15 report to the Governor and the General Assembly.
- 16 (2) On or before January 1, 1998, the Task Force shall submit its final report  
17 to the Governor and the General Assembly.
- 18 (g) The Task Force shall terminate on January 1, 1998.

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
20 ~~October~~ June 1, 1996.