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## Senate Bill 219

Date: January 13, 2022  
Committee: Senate Finance Committee  
Bill Title: Office of Cemetery Oversight - Sunset Extension  
Re: **Letter of Support**

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The Office of Cemetery Oversight was established in Title 5 of the Business Regulation Article of the Maryland Annotated Code by the Maryland Legislature in August 1997. It was placed under the regulatory authority of the Department of Labor. The office provides high standards of performance in the death care industry; enhances healthy economic competition; promotes consumer confidence in burial goods, products, and services; and provides structure and oversight to pre-planning arrangements. The Office provides a responsive complaint/resolution process for consumers and operates a fair and effective regulatory enforcement system for cemeteries, monument dealers and sellers of burial goods, and crematories that are subject to its regulatory authority.

The primary objective for the office is to register and monitor Maryland sole proprietorships, individuals, partnerships, corporations, and limited liability companies operating cemeteries, as well as businesses providing burial goods and services to consumers, including monuments and memorials. The Office also regulates and provides registration for crematories under its jurisdiction in the state.

Responsibilities of the Office include the investigation and mediation of consumer complaints involving registrants and permit holders. To protect Maryland citizens from unfair and unscrupulous practices, the office determines and enforces the ethical standards related to the operation of cemeteries and those related to the provision of burial goods and services within the state.

The Office of Cemetery Oversight remains committed to accomplishing its objective of ensuring industry compliance with Maryland law. As well, it is the mission and duty of the Office to protect the citizens of Maryland who are making contractual decisions and financial commitments during a very emotional and painful time.

**For these reasons, the Department respectfully requests a favorable report from the Committee on Senate Bill 219.**

Andrew Fulginiti, Legislative Director - [Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov](mailto:Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov)