

Robert A. Pumphrey Funeral Home  
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Robert A. Pumphrey Funeral Home  
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Family owned since 1854



www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com

February 23, 2024

Senate Bill 893

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in opposition to Senate Bill 893 for the following reasons:

- 1) There is not a health concern for neighbors, regardless of how close they are to a crematorium. Crematoriums are extremely clean burning and the biggest byproduct from cremation is water vapor. Our crematorium has been in existence since 1987 and we do not receive complaints from anyone, including neighbors that are in close proximity to our crematorium.
  - See the attached letter from American Crematory Equipment Company and a statement from the website from the Cremation Association of North America that back this stance.
- 2) Crematoriums are already closely monitored and inspected by the Maryland Department of the Environment. There is no need for further restrictions.
- 3) This Bill, as written, is so vague that most of the current crematoriums in Areas III and IV risk having their permits to operate not renewed. If this were to happen there would be dire results for the funeral homes that own the crematoriums and for all of the Maryland residents in Areas III and IV who would lose their local options for cremation.

There is no logic in allowing this bill to pass. Thank you for your time.

Very truly yours,

William A. Pumphrey, 6<sup>th</sup> Generation  
Vice President/General Manager





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"SERVICE IS EVERYTHING"

February 14, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

American Crematory Equipment Co. has been Manufacturing, Servicing, Repairing and Permitting Cremation Equipment for 50 years. We have been servicing and maintaining the cremation equipment at Pumphrey's Funeral Home for many years making sure it adheres to the highest standards in the industry.

Cremation equipment does not pose a danger to the communities in which they serve and are extremely clean burning. The emissions from cremators are primarily water vapor. This is due to the fact that the human body is mostly H<sub>2</sub>O.

There have been studies performed by our national trade organizations that show more pollutants are emitted from fast food locations than from cremation equipment. The local Air Quality Management Districts monitor and regulate emissions from all industries and in most states cremators are considered a Minor Source and are considered nonpolluting sources.

In closing, the residents around a funeral home can rest assured the cremator poses no threat of harm to them or the surrounding communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "Michael Burwell", is written over the word "Sincerely".

Michael Burwell

CEO

Below are technical details regarding cremation from the Cremation Association of North America (CANA). As you will see, the end result of cremation that would be the “concern” to proposed Senate Bill 893 is carbon dioxide, water, oxygen, etc... Nothing that should be of any concern and nothing that poses any health risk.

## THE TECHNICAL DETAILS

The process of cremation is essentially the conversion of a solid to a gas. This is accomplished by heating the body, which contains between 65% and 85% water by weight, to a temperature high enough to facilitate the combustion process. Laws for required temperatures vary by state, but the cremation process usually occurs between 1400 and 1600 degrees F.

The combustion process in the cremator proceeds in two stages — first is primary combustion of the deceased in the main chamber of the cremator. Tissue, organs, body fat, and casket or other container materials burn off as gases and move to a secondary chamber, where they continue to undergo combustion. The bone fragments remain in the primary chamber. The inorganic particles, usually from the cremation container, settle on the floor of the secondary chamber. The gases formed as a by-product of combustion such as carbon dioxide, water, oxygen, etc. finally discharge through a stack in the roof of the crematory building.

## WHAT CAN BE CREMATED?

Personal items of the deceased, such as jewelry, watches or other items will be removed from the container and returned to the family with prior arrangement. Sometimes families request that items of significance be cremated with the deceased. In some cases this can be allowed, but in many cases it cannot. This is for safety reasons, as not everything is combustible and may cause damage to the equipment or the operator if left in the container. The funeral director will advise the family on what can or cannot be put in the container.

## WHAT IS IN THE CREMATED REMAINS?

The bone fragments that remain in the primary chamber are mostly calcium phosphates, with some other minor minerals. Cremated remains are generally white to gray in color. Additionally, there may be pieces of metal in the cremated remains – this metal may come from surgical implants like hip replacements, dental fillings, casket handles, or jewelry that was not removed prior to cremation. The metal is separated from the cremated remains before they are processed (pulverized). The metal is typically recycled

The average weight of adult cremated remains is between four and six pounds; a tiny percentage of the body’s original mass. The cremation chamber is either swept thoroughly or vacuumed with specially designed equipment to retrieve as much of the remains as possible.