

SB893_Letter_2024.pdf

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Position: FAV



COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
COURT HOUSE, TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204

DAVID MARKS
COUNCILMAN, FIFTH DISTRICT
COUNCIL5@BALTIMORECOUNTYMD.GOV

COUNCIL OFFICE: 410-887-3384
FAX: 410-887-5791

February 26, 2024

The Honorable Mary Washington
Maryland State Senate
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Senator Washington:

I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 893, which would establish distance requirements for cremation facilities and similar establishments.

Over the past two years, I have become very familiar with controversies regarding the placement of funeral homes and cremation facilities. In particular, a funeral home and crematorium have been proposed for an area along the Philadelphia Road corridor that has numerous residential communities and businesses, including restaurants with outdoor dining. It is clear to me that sufficient statewide standards do not exist for the placement of these facilities.

Numerous states have enacted more rigid standards than Maryland, and given the increasingly popularity of cremation services, I believe it is important for the General Assembly to outline in clear terms specific distance requirements. In 1958, less than four percent of Americans were cremated; the Cremation Association of North America estimates that over 50 percent chose this option by 2018. That number will continue to grow.

Last year, the Baltimore County Council adopted Resolution 25-23, which requests statewide distance standards for these businesses. Thank you for your support of this legislation.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Marks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

David Marks
Baltimore County Councilman

crematorytestimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Carol Rice

Position: FAV

Testimony in support of SB 893,

Siting requirements for Crematories

Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Citizens along the York Road corridor have been trying to have their concerns about air quality in their neighborhood heard for three years. Because of environmental concerns, the York Road Partnership and other parties have been opposing a crematory proposed by the Vaughn Greene Funeral Home. No matter what it's called, a crematory is an incinerator. Aware of the dangers posed by existing incinerators, the Baltimore City Council has passed a law prohibiting the use of new incinerators within the city limits. Nevertheless, the zoning board granted permission claiming that a crematory is not an incinerator.

The community appealed this decision to the Circuit Court and failed. It seems that both the zoning board and the Circuit Court have made the absurd argument that because the community surrounding Vaughn Greene is already subject to air pollution a little more won't hurt. Tell that to Cindy Camp, one of the residents involved, whose grandchild suffers from asthma, as do a large number of other children who live in the surrounding community, part of the "Black Butterfly."

Because of this lack of concern for the health of citizens of Baltimore, I urge the committee to support SB 893 which will prohibit new crematoriums within 1000 feet of homes.

Carol A Rice

406 Northway

Baltimore, MD 21218

Testimony of Cindy Camp SB893.pdf

Uploaded by: cindy camp

Position: FAV

**Testimony of Cindy Camp
IN FAVOR OF SB893
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
February 24, 2024**

My name is Cindy Camp and I live within 200 feet of a proposed human crematorium incinerator at the Vaughn Greene Funeral Home in Baltimore. I am a 56-year-old woman diagnosed with an autoimmune disease. I live with my mom and my brother. My brother is a 60-year-old individual confined to bed. He has bronchitis and several other health issues. My mom is 88 years old, and she also suffers with asthma, and complains of shortness of breath.

My community has some of the highest rates of asthma and COPD in the state. And it is very disappointing that MDE has said they would not consider neighborhood health disparities before approving a crematorium in our neighborhood. We are a densely packed neighborhood. With a crematorium being so close to people's homes this is very scary. We have several schools in the area and a major concern for me is this the increased air pollution that will expose children playing outdoors and attending outdoor events. We often have cookouts and graduation parties.

We heard expert testimony during the hearings about the kind of pollution that crematorium incinerators produce. I believe the testimony provided by our experts left no doubt that the particulates and toxic chemicals released in an area with already high air pollution and health disparities is a danger to everyone who lives in this community.

I don't believe anyone in the State of Maryland should have to live next to an incinerator. So, I support Senate Bill 893, for the protection of our neighborhood and the health of the environment.

SB893 Testimony (Councilman Mark Conway _ Favorabl

Uploaded by: Councilman Mark Conway

Position: FAV



Councilman Mark Conway
Baltimore City Council *Fourth District*

100 N. Holliday Street, Suite 550 • Baltimore, Maryland 21202
(410) 396-4830 • mark.conway@baltimorecity.gov

TO: Chair Brian J. Feldman; Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan; members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Mark Conway (District 4, Baltimore City Council; Chair, Public Safety and Government Operations Committee)

RE: SB893 (Environment - Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators - Areas III and IV)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the committee,

I am writing today in strong support of SB893 (Environment - Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators - Areas III and IV), which would add a 1000-foot setback for crematories from homes, schools, and daycares. This requirement would safeguard the environment and public health of communities across Maryland, including the ones I am honored to represent in north and northeast Baltimore City.

Crematories emit harmful smoke and pollutants into the air that pose a serious risk to communities¹. These can include PM 2.5 particles, which are so hazardous to human health that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced plans to toughen standards. In contrast, the Maryland Department of the Environment has left regulations on crematories the same since 1991, even as science and our understanding of the impact pollution has on the environment and humans has significantly developed.

Combined with the effects of climate change on temperatures, increased pollution can result in more diagnoses of chronic respiratory diseases. The University of Maryland Medical System describes asthma as “reach[ing] epidemic levels” in Baltimore, with almost half of city schools reporting higher prevalence rates than the national average². 20% of Baltimore’s children (compared to 9% nationally) are estimated to have asthma. The Greater Govans community statistical area in my district was in the second-highest category for youth asthma-related emergency room visits in 2016 (the most recent year for which data is available)³.

¹ Caitlyn Hauke, “The Environmental Impact and Potential Human Health Effects of Cremation”, *Green Burial Council*, https://www.greenburialcouncil.org/environmental_impact_cremation.html

² “Asthma FAQs”, *University of Maryland Medical Center*, <https://www.umms.org/childrens/health-services/pediatric-pulmonology-allergy-sleep/breathmobile/asthma-faqs>

³ Sarah LaFave, “The Unequal Burden of Pediatric Asthma: A Call for an Equity-Driven, Multimodal, Public Health Approach to Asthma in Baltimore”, *Abell Foundation*, [https://abell.org/sites/default/files/files/2020_Abell_pediatric%20asthma_FINAL-web%20\(dr\).pdf](https://abell.org/sites/default/files/files/2020_Abell_pediatric%20asthma_FINAL-web%20(dr).pdf)

With our knowledge and the increased popularity of cremation, now is the time to impose pragmatic limits to ensure funeral homes have the flexibility to cater to this growing market while not imperiling Marylanders. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark S. Conway, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Mark S. Conway, Jr.

RWIA_Support_SB893_Feb2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Daniel Pontious

Position: FAV



RADNOR-WINSTON IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

406 Woodford Road, Baltimore MD 21212

RadnorWinstonAssociation@gmail.com www.radnorwinston.org

February 26, 2024

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SUPPORT SB 893, Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Radnor-Winston Improvement Association in strong support of Senate Bill 893, which establishes a required 1,000-foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycare facilities.

Radnor-Winston is a community on the York Road corridor in Baltimore City of more than 300 single-family homes, apartments, and affordable housing units for senior citizens and people with disabilities. More than one-third of those homes, including 87 single-family homes, two apartment buildings, and an affordable home for people with disabilities are located within 1,000 feet of a proposed crematorium incinerator at the Vaughn Greene Funeral Home directly across York Road from our community.

Human crematoria are incinerators, like solid and medical waste incinerators. They are so similar that Vaughn Greene uses emissions from burning medical waste to calculate the emissions its human crematorium is likely to produce. Yet human crematoria have no emissions control equipment, and the Maryland Department of Environment does not monitor emissions or require stack tests after issuing a permit.

In our local case, Vaughn Greene is located within 200 feet of homes in a community with elevated rates of asthma and COPD. Hundreds of homes, including more than 100 in our neighborhood, are within 1,000 feet. Given other sources of pollution and nearby vulnerable populations, the State of Maryland should not allow this to occur. We strongly urge you to pass SB 893 to give communities like those around Vaughn Greene a margin of protection from the rapidly expanding crematorium industry.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me at dan.pontious@icloud.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Pontious
President

SB 893 Joint LTR of support FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Dru Schmidt-Perkins

Position: FAV

***Bluewater Baltimore * CASA * Clean Water Action *
Chesapeake Climate Action Network * Climate Justice
Wing of Maryland Legislative Coalition * Indivisible
Howard County * Unitarian Universalist Legislative
Ministry of Maryland ****

**SB 893 Environment - Siting Requirements for Crematories
and Crematory Incinerators - Areas III and IV**
Education Energy and Environment Committee
February 27, 2024

Position: Favorable

The above organizations urge your support of legislation to require a 1,000-foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycares. This measure will ensure the availability of cremation services while protecting the health of nearby residents and vulnerable populations.

Crematoriums are incinerators but lack pollution monitors and emission controls and operate under outdated Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations, last updated in 1991. Crematories emit mercury, hydrochloric acid, heavy metals, dioxins, furans and small particulate matter into the air. MDE does not require stack tests or monitor emissions.

Further, because of the increased demand for cremation (it is cheaper than burial), there is an increase in new crematorium incinerators proposed – including in Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Frederick counties.

Alarming, funeral homes seek to add these crematories to their neighborhood-based funeral homes meaning a large increase in these small incinerators and the emissions from poorly regulated and monitored pollution located in residential neighborhoods – all over the state.

Because current regulations are inadequate, we urge you to support this simple and reasonable fix to protect our neighborhoods and our health, especially the most vulnerable to additional air pollution.

EAC testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Gianna Sansonetti

Position: FAV



Loyola University Maryland Environmental Action Club

President: *Gianna Sansonetti*

February 23rd, 2024

TO: Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

HEARING DATE: February 27th, 2024

BILL: SB 893

TITLE: Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators – Areas III and IV

POSITION: SUPPORT

Loyola University Maryland's student-led Environmental Action Club aims to create a community for our members to become more informed about environmental justice, particularly in Baltimore. After hearing about our neighbors from the York Road community's opposition over the last four years to a proposed crematorium at Vaughn Greene Funeral Home, we have become particularly concerned. Having heard their apprehensions, we stand in solidarity with the York Road Partnership and consider this an environmental justice issue that demands our attention.

We are particularly troubled by the fact that the majority-Black neighborhoods surrounding the proposed site of this crematorium already have documented elevated levels of asthma, COPD, and cardiac disease and worry that placing an incinerator here would also negatively impact the health and well-being of already marginalized communities. Seeing that this particular stretch of road already struggles with air pollution as a heavily traveled route (on the busiest bus route in Baltimore, no less) in an urban setting with numerous drive-throughs, we fear that this crematorium would do more harm than good for our community by adding a new source of harmful PM 2.5 air pollution and various toxic pollutants.

We appreciate that Senate Bill 893 aims to protect residential areas and facilities that care for vulnerable populations from air pollution by establishing this distance of 1,000 feet. Knowing that there are other communities in Maryland just like ours, we are proud to support this bill in hopes that they may never face the same threat.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 893.

LECA Letter Supporting Senate Bill 893.pdf

Uploaded by: Joel Carlin

Position: FAV

Chairman Brian Feldman
Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Chair and Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write as the Secretary of the Lake Evesham Community Association which includes 500 members here in north Baltimore.

I urge a favorable vote for SB893, which would require a 1000-foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycares. This commonsense measure will ensure the availability of cremation services while protecting the health of nearby residents and vulnerable populations.

As you may know, crematoriums are incinerators that lack pollution monitors and emission controls and operate under outdated Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations that were last updated in 1991. Crematoriums frequently incinerate medical devices, implanted in bodies, that contain hazardous chemicals, plastics, metals, pharmaceuticals, and batteries. The existing COMAR rules related to crematoriums do not adequately address the emission burden created by the destruction of these devices during cremation.

As direct cremation is more cost effective than direct burial, Maryland is experiencing an increase in new crematorium incinerator proposals – including in the jurisdictions where there are already clusters (Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Frederick).

Our community is concerned that funeral homes are seeking to add these crematoriums to their neighborhood-based funeral homes. This will lead to a large increase in the number of small incinerators located in residential neighborhoods throughout Maryland.

Neighbors throughout North Baltimore’s York Road community are united in our opposition to a proposed new crematorium incinerator at a funeral home in our densely populated and racially diverse neighborhood. Many homes sit within 150 feet of the proposed new pollution source. The blocks directly surrounding the funeral home consist largely of African American residents that have experienced elevated levels of asthma, COPD and other diseases causally related to air pollution. Placing a new crematorium incinerator in this neighborhood would likely have detrimental effects on our neighbors’ health and well-being.

Because current regulations are inadequate, we urge you to support this simple and reasonable fix to protect our neighborhoods and the health of Maryland residents who are already suffering from the existing effects of air pollution.

Sincerely,
Joel Carlin
Lake Evesham Community Association

Cc: Members of the Committee

Testimony York Road Partnership KDeCamp.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen DeCamp

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY OF KAREN DECAMP,
REPRESENTING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE YORK ROAD PARTNERSHIP, BALTIMORE, MD**

SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

York Road Partnership is membership network of 30+ neighborhoods and affiliates promoting the vitality of Baltimore City's York Road community as a desirable urban environment in which to live, shop, work and worship.

President
Christopher Forrest
Winston Govans

Vice President
Phyllis Gilmore
Woodbourne-McCabe

Treasurer
Carol Rice
Guilford

Recording Secretary
Karen DeCamp
Radnor-Winston

Corresponding Secretary
Christopher Pisano
Homeland

At-Large Members

Cindy Camp
Richnor Springs

Steve Davis
Wilson Park

Stephanie Geller
Community Wealth Builders

Leila Kohler-Frueh
Habitat for Humanity of the
Chesapeake

Committee Chairs

Business Engagement
Christopher Forrest

**Housing and Neighborhood
Revitalization**
Donna Blackwell & Dan Pontious

Public Safety
Christopher Forrest

Public Space and Greening
Helene Perry & Kyra McDonnell

401 Woodbourne Ave
Baltimore MD 21212
yorkroadpartnership@gmail.com

Honorable Chair and Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I write as the former President and current Secretary of the Board of the York Road Partnership in Baltimore, which is an all-volunteer coalition of 30 neighborhoods, churches, schools, non-profits and institutions.

I urge a favorable vote for SB893, which would require a 1000 foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycares. This common sense measure will ensure the availability of cremation services while protecting the health of nearby residents and vulnerable populations.

We don't oppose cremation, but we urge the General Assembly to get ahead of the rapid growth of neighborhood-based crematories and make this simple fix to locate these incinerators a reasonable distance from homes and schools.

Crematoriums are incinerators but lack pollution monitors and emission controls and operate under outdated Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations, last updated in 1991. Crematories emit mercury, hydrochloric acid, heavy metals, dioxins, furans and small particulate matter into the air. MDE does not require stack tests or monitor emissions.

Further, because of the increased demand for cremation (it is cheaper than burial), we are seeing an increase in new crematorium incinerators proposals – including in the jurisdictions where there are already clusters (Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Frederick).

Most alarming is that because funeral homes seek to add these crematories at their neighborhood-based funeral homes, we could be looking at a large increase in futures years in these small incinerators located in residential neighborhoods – all over the state.

Here in north Baltimore's York Road community, neighbors are united across a stark racial divide to fight a proposed new crematorium incinerator at a funeral home in a densely packed neighborhood with many homes 150 feet from this proposed new pollution source. The blocks directly around the funeral home, majority Black, already have elevated levels of asthma, COPD and other diseases causally related to air pollution. This is perhaps one of the worst places to place a new crematory incinerator.

Please protect Maryland's neighborhoods with this very reasonable bill.

Signed_SB893.pdf

Uploaded by: Leila Kohler-Fruh

Position: FAV

Senate Bill 893

Education, Environment, and Transportation Committee
February 27, 2024

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Feldman and members of the committee,

As a member organization in the York Road Partnership, we understand the long battle that communities near this proposed crematorium have had to attempt to keep an incinerator from their neighborhoods. We support the community and its efforts to protect this residential neighborhood from housing a human crematorium.

The surrounding communities have demonstrated how much is at stake in this issue, from health concerns to property value concerns. The communities include neighborhoods where we have successfully settled dozens of homeowners over the past few decades, and where a new homebuyer is about to be settled, in the Woodbourne-McCabe community, within a matter of weeks. We understand that many homeowners in the immediate community by the crematorium, and neighboring ones, like Woodbourne-McCabe, are deeply invested in not having this incinerator present in their local surroundings.

We urge a favorable vote for SB893, which would require a 1000 foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycares.

Respectfully submitted,



Leila Kohler-Frueh, Director of Community Engagement

Testimony of Lisa Polyak_Support SB893.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa Polyak

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY OF LISA M. POLYAK
SCIENCE ADVISOR TO THE YORK ROAD PARTNERSHIP, BALTIMORE, MD
SUPPORTING SB893 - SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HEARING
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Senator Feldman, Senator Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am an environmental engineer and public health scientist. For the last 35 years I have worked for the Army Medical Command and the Defense Health Agency evaluating environmental health exposures for U.S. Servicemembers stationed in the US and around the world. Today, I am appearing in a private capacity as the Science Advisor to the York Road Partnership in Baltimore.

I urge a favorable vote for SB893.

I want to make 4 points about why this bill is good science and good policy.

1. Demand for cremation has risen dramatically in the last 20 years due to necessity and cost. The Maryland State Funeral Directors Association reports that 52% of Marylanders needing after-death care chose cremation rather than burial. This demand is reflected in the **116 air permits issued for crematory incinerators by the Maryland Department of the Environment** (MDE). According to MDE records, air permit applications for human crematories have doubled in the last 10 years in Maryland.
2. There are no Federal air quality regulations governing the operation of crematory incinerators; and **MDE regulations on crematories have not been updated in over 30 years** (since 1991). Further, having reviewed a majority of the crematory air permits issued by MDE – I can tell you that there are no permit obligations to perform a stack test or to measure stack emissions to identify what kinds of pollutants are emitted, or to measure whether emissions meet the lone crematory emission standard for particulate matter that appears in COMAR.
3. Unlike regular incinerators, **crematory incinerators have no emission controls**, and **no monitors that measure how much pollution comes out of the exhaust stack**. The only optional device that some crematories are equipped with is a smoke detector – like the kind you have in your kitchen – that alarms when smoke in the exhaust stack is too dark or too dense.
4. Opponents of this bill state that cremation poses no health risks – that the stack exhaust only contains carbon dioxide and water vapor. We know that this is not true because the American Medical Association estimates that **10% of Americans have a medical device implanted in their body during their lifetime**. Things like pacemakers, defibrillators, drug dispensers, vascular stents, synthetic joints, prosthetic limbs, cosmetic implants and dental fillings which are not removed before cremation. Opposition testimony to this bill cites a report by the Cremation Association of North America stating,

“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”.

Crematories are processing much more than just human remains. **Crematories are not designed to incinerate these materials – and because of the lack of pollution control – will just emit the partially burned remnants of these devices in the stack exhaust and out into the neighborhoods surrounding the incinerator.**

Because of the lack of updated regulations, the lack of emission control and monitoring, and the increasing presence of medical devices and synthetic materials during cremation – a setback from homes and vulnerable populations is a simple, no cost protection for public health that permits the cremation industry to continue to provide a valuable service.

Guilford Assoc Support of Senate Bill 893_022624.p

Uploaded by: Patrick Nolan

Position: FAV



Chairman Brian Feldman
Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Chair and Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

I urgently write as the President of the Guilford Association, which includes 800 residences here in north Baltimore City.

I strongly request a favorable vote for Senate Bill 893 that would require a 1,000-foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools and daycare facilities. This prudent measure will ensure the availability of cremation services while protecting the health of nearby residents and vulnerable populations.

Crematoriums are incinerators but lack pollution monitors and emission controls and operate under outdated Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations, which were last updated more than 30 years ago. Crematories emit mercury, heavy metals, hydrochloric acid, dioxins, furans, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and small particulate matter into the air. MDE does not require stack tests or monitor emissions.

Because of the increased demand for cremation, which is much cheaper than burial, there is an increase in new crematorium incinerator proposals – including in the jurisdictions where there are already clusters (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, and Prince George’s Counties).

Most disconcerting is that because funeral homes seek to add these crematories at their neighborhood-based funeral homes, we could be looking at a large increase in future years of these small incinerators located in residential neighborhoods – all over our state.

Here in north Baltimore’s York Road community, neighbors are united across a stark racial divide to fight a proposed new crematorium incinerator at a funeral home in a densely packed neighborhood with many homes 150 feet from this proposed new pollution source. The blocks directly around the funeral home, majority Black population, already have elevated levels of asthma, COPD and other diseases causally related to air pollution. This location is one of the worst places to place a new crematory incinerator.

Because of inadequate current regulations, we urge you to support this simple and reasonable fix to protect our neighborhoods and our health, especially the most vulnerable, to unnecessary, additional air pollution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Brennan', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Emily Brennan, President
Guilford Association, Inc.

cc: Members of the Committee

Sandi McFadden Testimony_SB893.pdf

Uploaded by: Sandi McFadden

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY OF SANDI McFADDEN
COMMUNITY SCHOOL COORDINATOR FOR THE GOVANS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BALTIMORE, MD
SUPPORTING SB893
SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HEARING
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Senator Feldman, Senator Kagan, and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Sandi McFadden and I support SB 893. I am the Community School Coordinator for the Govans Elementary School in Baltimore where I serve as a liaison between the school, the neighborhood, the community, and the City. A foundational principle of Community Schools is that there must be connected and coordination among the community elements that affect a child's welfare.

I am concerned that environmental policy in Maryland has become a stand-alone entity that is disconnected from its mission to protect the environment for the health and well-being of Marylanders.

Our community has worked with city and state authorities to bring investment for revitalization, public safety, greening, and commercial activity into neighborhoods that have suffered from redlining and disinvestment. These efforts have led to a 39% decrease in vacant homes, two new 21st Century Schools, and a Healthy Neighborhood designation.

Current environmental regulations will allow a crematory incinerator to be placed in the heart of our neighborhood – less than 200 feet from our homes - prioritizing the interest of a single business owner over 2 decades of coordinated effort to restore our community. These crematories have none of the emission controls or pollution monitors that MDE requires on larger incinerators. They will create a health burden as well as a disincentive to prospective homeowners or businesses. No one wants an incinerator in their backyard.

Creating a 1,000 foot buffer for crematories is a no cost, common sense solution. It permits crematory businesses to exist, protects the health of the community, and preserves the hard-earned revitalization

of our neighborhoods.

Tim Schluth.pdf

Uploaded by: Timothy Schluth

Position: FAV

February 23rd, 2024

TO: Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

HEARING DATE: February 27th, 2024

BILL: SB 893

TITLE: Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators – Areas III and IV

POSITION: SUPPORT

As student interns at Loyola University Maryland's Center for Community, Service, and Justice, we aim to create a more just and equitable world through service, education, and programming. We believe this process starts with listening to the needs of the community that surrounds our school. For context, we are located along the York Road corridor, one of the starkest racial dividing lines in the region. As we became aware of the York Road Partnership's concerns with the proposed construction of a crematorium along the York Road Corridor in recent years, we became heavily invested in crematory policy.

We have seen the power of community firsthand as our institution has worked with our neighbors to attract investment to the corridor and supported local business and initiatives, and we share their concerns about adding an incinerator near the schools, residences, and care facilities of a densely-populated, majority-Black community that already suffers from air pollution and increased rates of asthma, COPD, and cardiac disease. We stand in solidarity with our neighbors and believe that clean air is a right.

We know that our community is not the only community like this in the state of Maryland and are therefore writing in support of Senate Bill 893. Given the largely unknown effects of inhaling toxins like those released from crematories on a daily basis, we believe that these regulations have the potential to save lives and allow our communities to thrive.



Tim Schluth



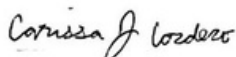
Sofia Karras



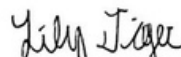
Vera Pavlovich




Andrew Haye



Carissa Cordero



Lily Tiger




Kendyl Archer



Hanna Addis



Olivia Casey



Jace Blehar



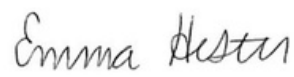
Nosa Omoregbee



Maeve Walsh



Matthew Pawlow



Emma Hester



Delaney Meller



Will Sears

Letter re crematory site restrictions.pdf

Uploaded by: Arthur Queen

Position: UNF



Burrier-Queen FUNERAL HOME

— AND —
CREMATORY, P.A.

1212 West Old Liberty Road
Winfield, Maryland 21784-9327
(410) 795-0300 • (888) 267-0975 • Fax (410) 549-1029
email:bqfd@burrier-queen.com • www.burrier-queen.com

February 15, 2024

Dear Sir/Madam:

On behalf of the funeral directors of Burrier-Queen Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A. and all of the families that we serve, we would like to state our objection to Senate Bill 893, and House Bill 1374 concerning the siting of crematories.

Our on-site crematory has been in operation since 2004, with never a complaint from the surrounding residents, or the high school who are all within the proposed area of restriction. We submit to yearly inspections of our facility and submit an annual Environmental Compliance Report to the state. To date, we have performed over 4900 cremations, serving local families, and the State Anatomy Board.

We take pride in assuring the families we serve that their loved one will never have to leave our care. These new restrictions would put our facility in jeopardy creating a burden for those families, both emotional and financial.

In conclusion I would like to reiterate that we vehemently OPPOSE the passage of SB 893 and HB 1374. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Arthur T. Queen
President

James B. Covey
Vice President

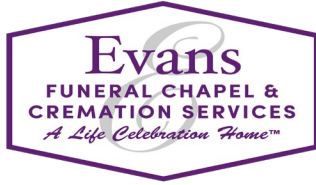
Todd A. Kellner
Secretary

Tyler J. Moser
Manager

SB-893 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Evans

Position: UNF



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February 23rd, 2024

To the Honorable Members of the Maryland Senate,

I am reaching out to express my firm opposition to the proposed bills, SB-893 – AN ACT concerning Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators – Areas III and IV. I wish to have this letter entered as testimony on my behalf.

As the owner of funeral homes and crematories in Maryland, I am deeply concerned about the potential negative impact of this legislation on our ability to provide dignified death care services to families across the state. The provisions outlined in these bills, particularly the proposed prohibition on locating new crematories within 1,000 feet of certain properties such as assisted living facilities, properties serving children, and residential properties, are unnecessary and could have far-reaching consequences for our industry.

Many funeral homes, like mine, have been family-owned and operated for generations, becoming integral parts of the community's history and culture. Funeral homes play a vital role in the social, cultural, and emotional well-being of the communities they serve, earning them a place of significance and respect. These bills would push future funeral homes further outside of the communities they are trying to serve. A crematory within a funeral home offers several practical, logistical advantages, enhancing the overall service and provides a comforting experience to the families.

While I understand the desire to address concerns about proximity to sensitive properties, I believe these restrictions are based on misconceptions and lack of scientific evidence to warrant such regulations. Implementing such restrictive setback requirements would severely limit communities' ability to establish new crematories, potentially forcing families to travel longer distances, increasing costs, and adding even more emotional strain for families.

Moreover, these setback requirements might be perceived as discriminatory toward the funeral and crematory sector. Cremation stands as a crucial facet of end-of-life care, favored by numerous Maryland residents. If our concern is truly about health and the environment, why not target home furnaces, vehicles, trucks, factories, restaurants, and any other sources emitting exhaust? We operate under full government regulation and scrutiny. We self-test, our manufacturers test, and the state tests our crematories on a regular basis. If there were genuine health concerns, wouldn't inspectors or health professionals have uncovered them by now? Should my employees and other crematory operators be worried? The crux of the matter is this: perhaps some individuals fear death and prefer not to reside or work near funeral homes or crematories. Due to those fears, health impacts are being used as a pretext. Some individuals are uncomfortable with death and the proximity to these establishments doesn't give them the right to control what any owner can do on a properly zoned property.

Furthermore, the scientific basis for mandating these setback distances is questionable at best. There is no conclusive evidence suggesting that crematories pose significant environmental or health risks to nearby properties, considering that we operate under established safety and emissions standards. Enforcing arbitrary setback requirements could create unnecessary barriers for businesses and communities looking to establish new crematories without providing tangible benefits.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to oppose this bill and consider alternative approaches that strike a balance between community needs and the interests of the death care industry. Rather than imposing overly restrictive measures, I recommend focusing on existing regulations and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that crematories operate safely and responsibly while maintaining accessibility to essential services for all Maryland residents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I trust that you will consider my perspective and the concerns of other stakeholders when deliberating and voting on these two bills. Please contact me directly if you have any questions. If anyone would like to tour our crematory in Forest Hill, please do not hesitate to ask. Education is crucial in making an informed decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles F. Evans, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charles F. Evans, Jr.

President

MSFDA-SB 893-written-2024.pdf

Uploaded by: James Doyle

Position: UNF



Maryland State Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

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Maryland 20916

410-553-7706

Email: msfda@msfda.net Web Site: www.msfda.net

SB 893 (2024)

Position of the MD State Funeral Directors Association: UNFAVORABLE

- The Bill would prohibit the construction and operation of crematories, is arbitrary and w/o basis, and would seriously harm both small businesses and consumers throughout the state.
- Consumers now choose cremation at a rate of about 52% in MD, and it is continuously increasing. By 2027, MD projections are 58%, and by 2045, 80%. See attachment from CANA, the Cremation Association of North America. **CANA further concluded that MD crematories were already at or near capacity.**
- **In response to increasing consumer demand, funeral establishments have invested, and continue to invest, substantial investment in new facilities.** These crematories are extensively regulated and permitted by the MD Department of the Environment.
- Consumers choose cremation because of personal choice, or because it is often less expensive than traditional burial.
- **This bill, if passed, will ensure that individuals who prefer cremation will pay substantially higher costs.** With increasing demand, and an inadequate supply of crematories to meet demand, consumers will be required to wait for cremations for much longer periods, additional days or weeks. And MD law requires that these deceased must either be embalmed, or placed in refrigeration. See Health-General Article, section 5-513(b). A delay of only a week will increase costs by many hundreds of dollars.
- **At the same time, this bill would substantially harm funeral homes and crematories in MD.** Funeral homes have spent considerable sums to construct crematories, and to seek regulatory approval for new crematories, in response to consumer demand. Costs can easily run \$200,000 or more, for permitting, zoning approval, and the machinery itself, plus additional building space to house it. While some language in the bill suggests it would apply only to new crematories, opponents of cremation will seize on bill language to contend that MDE may not issue renewals to many existing crematories, which could lead to shutdowns, when new, increased capacity is needed.
- **Finally, the bill is completely arbitrary in its restrictions, and would prevent the state's environmental expert, MDE, from applying objective scientific criteria to the crematory permitting process.** That process is quite extensive, takes into account the individual circumstances of each crematory for a permit, and places appropriate restrictions on MDE permits in order to protect public health and safety.

US Crematory Capacity

The Cremation Association of North America (CANA) conducted a study (March 2019) to determine the capacity for crematory businesses in the United States. CANA collected ten or more years of the following data:

- Total numbers of state cremations (Source: Vital Statistics departments)
- Total number of crematory licenses (Source: Business licensing authority and/or environmental regulatory authority)

CANA has been unable to find a reliable source to find the total number of cremators (machines) under the rooftop of each licensed crematory (rooftop). The number of machines, even estimated, is a critical metric to determine capacity. However, even the rooftop comparison is useful to estimate statewide capacity.

After interviewing manufacturers and data analysis, CANA settled on two assumptions that guide the work:

1) Benchmark of 350 cremations per low-volume rooftop resulting in an average 1.4 cremations per day. Benchmark of 750 cremations per high volume business, resulting in an average of 3 cremations per day. The benchmarks factor in downtime for maintenance and repairs and staff turnover.

2) Each rooftop has an average of 1 machine. Few businesses in most states have higher volume requiring more than one machine, so that the numbers of those rooftops is typically insignificant, with certain exceptions. One of those exceptions is states with anti-combo restrictions, where there is a distinct separation in ownership between funeral homes and cemetery/crematory operations.

The following formula was used to develop estimated statewide capacity:

$$[\text{Total cremations}]/[\text{total rooftops}] = \text{Capacity}$$

Maryland Cremation Statistics and Projections:

2021	2022	2027	2032
50.7%	52.1%	58.0%	63.1%

Maryland is projected to reach 80% cremation around 2045

As of 2022, Maryland reports 38 licensed crematories for humans. Pet crematories are not included in this number.

Capacity Calculation: Maryland (2022 cremation rate = 52.1%)

2022: Total deaths = 55,518

2022: Total cremations = 28,898

2022: Total rooftops = 38

2022 Total machines = 50 (estimated)

Total capacity per licensed rooftop = 577 - 761 cremations annually

The rough calculation above reveals that Maryland is at risk for having too little cremation capacity in pre-pandemic times. The number of machines under each rooftop is a critical data point to further study the problem.

Methodology

A typical cremation process requires 2-4 hours per cremation depending on the age, technology and manufacturer. The older the machine, the longer the cremation process, because cool down between cases is required. Maryland crematories employ a variety of machines so an average time of 3 hours per cremation is used for this example. Therefore a typical 8 hour shift per work day could handle 3 cremations. (It is standard practice to allow cool down for the final cremation of the day to occur overnight. And the next work day starts with removing those remains before charging the first case of the day).

Given 252 working days a year and 3 cremations a day in a 8 hour work day, then the maximum capacity of a machine would be 756 cremations annually. Factor in maintenance and special cases, i.e. overweight cases, infants, highly varnished caskets, witnessed cremations, and that number declines.

After analysis of the rooftop capacity, estimated machine capacity, and calculating the total cremations possibly in a workday per machine, the conclusion is that Maryland crematories were at or near capacity in 2022, the most recent year CANA has data.

Deaths do not occur evenly distributed over the course of the year, so it is highly likely that some crematories were beyond capacity at certain months throughout the year. When a crematory operates beyond capacity, wait times for grieving families increases and refrigerated storage can increase costs for families.



The CANANA Perspective on Particulate Emissions and Mercury: An In-Depth Look at a Global Controversy

For years, The Cremation Association of North America (CANANA) has witnessed the concern surrounding cremating human remains and the corresponding release of primarily two emissions: particulate matter (PM) and mercury (Hg). PM can be defined as solid particles suspended in a gas as a byproduct of all combustion processes, including cremations. Mercury on the other hand, is derived from the use of silver amalgam in dental fillings that is released into the environment during the cremation process. A task force was developed by CANANA to further investigate the issues; the results of the investigation are included in this report.

Particulate emissions (PM) are released into the environment in many ways, including through residential and commercial fuel-based heating — through cars, trucks, restaurant grills and fireplaces. None of these common community sources of PM have any emission controls to reduce, monitor or limit PM emissions. Crematories, however, have emission controls as part of their design to limit the amount of PM entering the atmosphere.

According to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), there are many ways mercury emissions are released into the air. Some of these common sources include municipal incinerators, the breaking of used fluorescent tube lamps, dental facilities, production and disposal of batteries, household trash disposal and residential heating. USEPA lists the operation of crematories as one of the lowest sources of Hg emissions. Mercury emissions from cremation are very low and they are not regulated by any environmental agency. Under the Clean Air Act, the USEPA reviewed and updated national air-quality standards for all types of possible pollutant sources, including crematories. This review considered all possible pollutants including PM and mercury. As a result, crematories were not considered for any further federal regulation. CANANA surveyed various crematories throughout the United States — Virginia, Georgia, Illinois, Washington, Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, California, Wisconsin and New York were just a few states to respond. CANANA asked if there has ever been an air-quality or environmental agency in these areas that raised a concern regarding the release of mercury emissions from their crematories: The unanimous answer was no.

The American Dental Association (ADA), which oversees and regulates dentists in the United States, reports that since 1990 the use of silver amalgam has dropped from a 68-percent usage rate to 30 percent. The ADA attributes this decrease to the patients' preferences for natural-looking non metallic dental fillings. Moreover, continuous changes in dental practices, as the durability of other cavity-filling materials are proven, continues to lessen the already minimal amounts of Hg being released.

Furthermore, the Indianapolis Office of Environmental Services has responded to this growing concern by performing crematory emissions studies to determine if a source would be required to obtain an air permit. The group concluded that, although Hg from silver amalgam is certainly released, in reality, emissions are quite small, below the minimum levels of all criteria pollutants and Hazardous Air Pollutants.

The USEPA also states that crematories statistically represent 0 percent of the total inventory for national mercury emission rates, according to their Best Point Estimates. Based on actual data

collected in 1999, when presumably more people still had silver amalgam fillings, all the U.S. crematories combined produced a total of only 238 pounds or 108 kilograms of Hg.

Actual tests performed for USEPA at the Woodlawn Crematorium by representatives of the Midwest Research Institute in New York, and published by the USEPA, have determined the amounts of Hg released to the environment. The tests show that in a total of nine cremations, two were suspected of not containing any silver amalgam whatsoever. They contend that the stack testing at the Woodlawn facility was considered to be representative of all crematoria operations and, therefore, a reliable source for developing an uncontrolled emission factor for use in estimating potential emissions from all crematoria. The conclusion is that the average mercury release of nine cremations yielded 0.456 grams or 0.0010 pounds of Hg per body. In addition, the average Hg release for the seven cremations believed to contain silver amalgam fillings yielded only 0.584 grams or 0.0013 pounds per body.

Further testing by Pelican Scientific in the United Kingdom measured Hg in crematoria emissions and submitted the results to The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency. Both agencies accepted the tests as having been conducted in compliance with testing standards. The first test, conducted during October 2006 at the Craigton Crematorium in Glasgow, Scotland, involved 23 cremations under normal operating conditions:

- 10 remains were suspected of not having silver amalgam fillings whatsoever.
- The average Hg release per cremation of more than 23 cremations yielded 0.128 grams or 0.0003 pounds per body.
- The average Hg release per cremation for the 13 cremations believed to contain silver amalgam fillings yielded 0.227 grams or 0.0005 pounds per body.

The second test, conducted September 2007 at the Linn Crematorium in Glasgow involved 31 cremations under normal operating conditions:

- 21 remains were suspected of not having silver amalgam fillings whatsoever.
- The average Hg release per cremation of more than 31 cremations yielded 0.323 grams or 0.0007 pounds per body.
- The average Hg release per cremation for the 10 cremations believed to contain silver amalgam fillings yielded 1.001 grams or 0.0022 pounds per body.

This information confirms that the Hg emissions information located in the USEPA National Emissions database is accurate for determining the Hg impact of cremations; and based on significant and unbiased testing, Hg emissions from crematories are not deemed sufficient to be regulated.

All the data available has already prompted notable environmentalists to draw realistic conclusions in regard to the emissions of Hg. Environmental Scientist Alexis Cain, of the Chicago office of the Environmental Protection Agency said, "I don't think it's a risk to people who live in the vicinity of crematoriums."

Two specific practices target the reduction of Hg emissions into the atmosphere via cremations. CANA recommended that neither of these directives be mandated:

- The first measure would be the installation of filtration systems or "bag houses" to the cremation equipment. There is no guarantee that these filtration systems will prevent the release of Hg into the environment, not to mention that they are extremely cost-prohibitive.
- The second measure suggests that teeth containing silver amalgam should be pulled prior to the cremation process. CANA considers this an act of mutilation and such an act would violate the respectful manner in which cremationists perform their duties. The notion that teeth-pulling would even be suggested implies that some individuals are not approaching this matter with objective insight. The misguided fear of mercury emissions clouds the realistic

assessment of their environmental impact. Our decisions should be based on the soundness of the data collected and intellectually interpreted.

The most extensive cremation equipment emissions research ever undertaken confirms that the design and operation of typical North American crematories provides significantly better emissions than regulations required, and even exceeds expectations with the older operating systems.

Summing up the matter, Samantha Wetzler, M.D., a medical examiner in the Tidewater Virginia region, said, "There are so many variables, and so many sources of mercury both to people and the environment, of which none have been eliminated ... not fish, amalgams, coal plants, industrial emissions and the breaking of light bulbs. It seems that regardless of what studies one does, no one will be able to predict these things, and pointing a finger at a crematory as one source that must be stopped seems ridiculous and frivolous. A neighbor putting a fluorescent bulb into the trash rather than recycling it properly will create more concrete hazards for the community than any amounts crematories will ... but policing of peoples' trash is not in the plans."

###

CANA is the recognized authority for all information, education, products, services and support for cremation. Founded in 1913, CANA is an International organization of over 1,300 members, composed of cemeterians, cremationists, funeral directors, industry suppliers and consultants. CANA's purpose is to actively lead and support the providers of cremation services and to promote memorialization. This is accomplished through the highest standards of ethics, education and consumer information. CANA's members support and adhere to the following principles: integrity and ethics; excellence; professional development and education; and leadership and innovation. For more information about CANA, visit www.cremationassociation.org.

Govans Presbyterian Church

Uploaded by: Kaye Gooch

Position: UNF

#GOVANS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

5828 York Road | Baltimore, Maryland 21212 | 410.435.9188 | www.govanspres.org

Rev. Shannon Weston | Bridge Pastor

February 26, 2024

Chairman Brian Feldman
Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Chair and Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

The Session of Govans Presbyterian Church supports the passage of SB 893. We urge a favorable vote for SB893, which would require a 1000-foot setback for new crematorium incinerators from homes, schools, and daycares. As an anchor institution along the York Road corridor in Baltimore, we have been opposed to a proposed Human Crematorium in our neighborhood. This legislation would not only protect our neighborhood, but other neighborhoods in Maryland.

Our primary concern is the proximity of the crematorium to local residential neighborhoods. Particularly, we wish to advocate for the interests of our low-income neighbors who already have elevated levels of asthma, COPD and diseases related to pollution. Current regulations are inadequate, we urge you to support this regulation to protect the most vulnerable in our community and throughout Maryland.

Sincerely,
The Session of Govans Presbyterian Church

Cc: Members of the Committee

SB 893 MDE OPP.pdf

Uploaded by: Les Knapp

Position: UNF



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

Senate Bill 893

***Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory
Incinerators – Areas III and IV***

Position: Oppose

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Date: February 27, 2024

From: Hadley Anthony

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **OPPOSES** SB 893.

Bill Summary

Senate Bill 893 would prohibit human crematories from being located within 1000 feet of a residence, a school, or certain care-related facilities in the Baltimore and District of Columbia metropolitan areas (Areas III and IV). Areas III and IV include the following geographic regions: Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties. Currently, there are approximately 32 human or human/animal crematory facilities in Areas III and IV. All 32 facilities are located within 1000 feet of a comprehensive care facility; an extended care facility; a child care center; a family child care center; a public or nonpublic primary, elementary, or secondary school building; or a residential property. The proposed legislation would prohibit these existing facilities from adding an additional crematory or replacing a crematory at the facility.

The limitations SB 893 would place on where a crematory can be located would make it extremely difficult to locate a crematory in the named areas. As written, the bill would prevent MDE from issuing a renewal operating permit for existing crematories in the affected areas, as all existing human crematories violate the bill's locational requirements. Not being able to issue renewal operating permits would mean the eventual elimination of all of those crematories in the affected areas.

Position Rationale

The bill does not provide a defensible basis for the location limitations. MDE follows a science-based review process when evaluating crematory permits. The evaluation determines air quality and public health impacts using tools that consider conservative emission estimates, the distance between those emissions and the property line, the actual equipment to be used to conduct cremations, the geometry of the building, and the associated emission stack. MDE uses these same tools for the hundreds of projects seeking approval for an Air Quality Permit to Construct received each year. This bill would remove the science-based review without providing a justification for the 1000 foot buffer. Accordingly, MDE asks for an **UNFAVORABLE** report for SB 893.

Contact: Les Knapp, Government Relations Director
Cell: 410-453-2611 (cell), Email: les.knapp@maryland.gov

1 - SB 893 - Morticians and FD Bd - Oppose - EEE.p

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: UNF



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Maryland Board of Morticians &
Funeral Directors
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215

2024 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 893
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
POSITION: Oppose

TITLE: Environment – Siting Requirements for Crematories and Crematory Incinerators – Areas III and IV

BILL ANALYSIS: This proposed legislation will prohibit a person from locating a new crematory or a property with a crematory incinerator within 1,000 feet of certain properties in Areas III and IV of the State and prohibiting the Department of the Environment from issuing a certain permit to a crematory or a property with a crematory incinerator under certain circumstances.

POSITION AND RATIONALE: The Maryland Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors (the “Board”) opposes SB 893.

The Board’s concern is SB 893 would have a detrimental impact on current existing crematories and crematory incinerators in areas III and IV as well as individuals in the process of completing their expansions already in progress who have made considerable investments to date. Under current regulation, crematory applicants go through a rigorous application, permitting and testing process from both the Board as well as the Maryland Department of the Environment, not limited to air analysis, emissions testing, fuel consumption and stack testing to name a few. To date, there is no documented evidence regarding the health effects experienced by workers or individuals who live/work near crematories. In addition, there are no studies that have been found that show causal links between crematory emissions and adverse health effects.

NIH-National Library of Medicine, CAN J Public Health 2020 Dec.-Mercury from Crematoriums states: Human health risk assessment an estimate of total emissions in British Columbia...”as in the case of long-term exposure, there is no indication that short-term exposure to peak ground-level mercury vapor concentrations associated with crematorium emissions poses a significant risk to human health”.

Of the 41 crematories the Board regulates and inspects, based on the “facilities, centers or properties” noted, this bill has the potential to affect 63% of those crematories. As written, modifying or changing their existing crematories require a “new” permit by the Maryland Department of the Environment and as a result, would cease their ability to provide this “in demand” service to their clients which would not only have an adverse effect on their business but would directly impact the needs of the families they serve.

As a result of the COVID pandemic, funeral homes and crematories experienced a significant increase in cremation and the demand for cremation continues to increase exponentially year after year due to the economy and what families are able to afford for their deceased loved ones. This demand has caused many funeral homes and crematoriums to invest in the expansion of their businesses and build their own crematories to meet those demands. SB 893 will restrict funeral homes and crematories from expanding in their current locations to help keep up with the shift in consumer preferences. Most funeral homes and crematories are community based and located in areas populated with businesses and homeowners. They are located in neighborhoods to be close to the families they serve or in areas that are in significant need of the affordability of cremation. They are revered for the services they offer to their communities and diverse religious faiths that cremation is part of their tradition and require participation and witnessing of cremation as part of the process.

As written SB 893 would:

- limit consumer choice
- create an economic hardship on families
- prohibit replacement of equipment as needed in existing businesses
- prohibit needed expansion in existing businesses
- impact the sale of funeral homes and or crematories
- create a monopolistic environment by restricting the freedom of entry and exit in the industry
- have an economic impact and disrupt businesses who have begun the building process but have not passed all inspections.

SB 893 as written does not define “Department,” leaves the word “issue” subject to interpretation and does not address “siting requirements” for possible future development of noted “facilities, centers or properties” near existing or future funeral homes and or crematories in areas III and IV.

For all of these reasons, the Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors strongly urges an unfavorable report on SB 893.

For more information, please contact Michele Kutta, CFSP, Board President at 410-263-4422 or at michele.kutta@maryland.gov.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.

Opposition to Bill 893.pdf

Uploaded by: William Pumphrey

Position: UNF

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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, 6th Generation
Vice President/General Manager





"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 H₂O.

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.