

**Bill:** HB1374 Siting Requirements for Crematories

**Position:** UNFAVORABLE

**Name:** Victor March Sr, President/CEO  
March Funeral Homes

March Funeral Homes is family owned and operates 6 Funeral Homes in Maryland including 1 Crematory in Prince Georges, Co. March Funeral Home also operates 1 Funeral Home in DC and 1 in Richmond, VA along with a 155 acre Cemetery in Baltimore, Co.

1. As written, SB893 restricts licensing a New Crematory within 1,000 feet of a Residence, a School, Child Care, Extended or Residential Care facility. This restriction of 1,000 feet appears to be arbitrary with no scientific evidence to support the need for such a restriction.
2. SB893 also removes the authority of the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) the governmental authority with the scientific and expertise in environmental matters from determining the appropriate distances in Licensing a Crematory.
3. I currently operate a Crematory in Prince Georges Co. that is less than 1,000 feet from the restricted areas. The retort is 40 years old and I am in the process of replacement. Under MDE requirements, the NEW Retort would require a New Permit! SB893 may prevent MDE from issuing me a New Permit!
- 4. The average city block is between 300-330 feet. A football field is 300'. That means that a new crematory cannot be within 3.33 Football fields in each direction for a Total RADIUS of 6.66 Football fields of a Residence, a School, Child Care, Extended or Residential Care facility. That would eliminate the possibility of a new crematory in most urban areas and competition in Maryland, especially Baltimore City!**
5. There are only 4 African American Crematory operators in the State. This 1,000 foot restriction would prevent funeral homes in urban cities from providing cremations on their premises, thus preventing them the ability to maintain care, custody and control of families loved ones.
6. The 1,000 feet restriction would drastically increase the cost of cremations! With limited possible locations (i.e. Industrial Parks), would require major investments in long-term leases with structural alterations. This cost would have to be passed on to the consumer.
7. In face of a rise in demand for cremations, with projections of 65% in 2035, this would drastically reduce the ability to increase the number of crematories causing delays and the potential for funeral homes to go to surrounding States for cremations.