

Good afternoon,

I am Joseph F. Ambrose, Jr. from Ambrose Funeral Home and Cremation Services. We have been in business since 1936 started by my grandfather Joseph T. Ambrose, Jr. in Baltimore County. Thirty years ago, the cremation rate was under 10%, it is now over 50% for us. We like to do everything in house to keep the costs down for us and our families we serve. With the percentage of families choosing cremation, it's now more of a need than a want to have our own crematory. We did every thing the way the law states. It's a very long process with no shortcuts. It's already very difficult to be allowed to open a crematory- it has to be on a main artery, not a secondary road, and must be in a funeral home or an industrial park. We had multiple public meetings with the neighborhood to find out their worries and concerns. There was very little problems, mostly support. Their biggest concern was to cremate on week nights. We had an open court where anyone would be allowed to speak and we were given the okay to move forward with our crematory. We built the addition to house the retort during the most expensive time material wise. We went through all we saved for this and have a loan. We originally thought the savings was enough. Now they want to change the rules to follow. The way this bill is written we won't be able to renew our permit to keep the crematory open. This would hurt everyone, some may lose their business, others will be okay but will have to raise their prices because the few crematories left will be able to decide the costs since there won't be much competition. That means the customers will be paying much more, the exact scenario we are trying to avoid.

I definitely understand the concerns of the residents not wanting a crematory in their neighborhood. The more I looked into it the more I was educated about how clean it is. The EPA and the Department of the Environment keep close tabs on everything. We are a bring your lunch to work neighborhood and we can't afford this bill.