

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

HB 1374 Crematory – Setback Requirements and Permits
Environment and Transportation Committee
March 6, 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Crematoriums are incinerators but lack pollution monitors and emission controls and operate under outdated Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) regulations, last updated in 1991. Crematoriums 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.

Alarmingly, funeral homes seek to add these crematoriums 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.