



Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs

Protecting a consumer's right to a meaningful, dignified, and affordable funeral.

**Senate Finance Committee, Maryland General Assembly
Testimony on HB1555 – Funeral Establishments, Crematories, and Reduction Facilities –
Oversight (Ensuring Dignity and Accountability in Crematory and Funeral Homes
Operations Act)**

Position: Support with further amendments to the amended House version Hearing date
March 27, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony from the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs (FCAME) in support of HB 1555, which would strengthen regulatory oversight of funeral establishments, crematories, and reduction facilities.

The original bill, as introduced in the House, would have gone even further in ensuring the proper storage of human remains by requiring refrigerated holding facilities for each funeral establishment, which we support.

Taxpayers should be able to feel confident that their tax dollars are supporting effective regulatory agencies. We find shocking the report that inspections have been so lax in recent years, and that at least one establishment has been allowed to continue operations in a substandard manner even after it was found that it was not in compliance with regulations. We support the requirement in the original HB1555 bill for an inspection 30 days after a citation is issued and for routine inspections, which were removed in the amended bill.

We support increased oversight of the Board of Morticians by granting the Governor the right to appoint the President of the Board and to remove any Board member for causes specified.

FCAME also supports increased transparency and communication with the public as specified in the original bill and disagree with the amended version, **specifically**: removing the requirements for reports regarding inspections and violations to the Senate Finance Committee, for inspections within 30 days after a citation is issued to a funeral or cremation facility, and for responding to public concerns about violations. The Board of Physicians makes public specifics about disciplinary actions taken with regard to physicians. We have heard from families of the deceased who were frustrated because they assumed that they should be able to get any sort of help from the Board but found none was forthcoming.

Testimony submitted by Barbara Blaylock, President of FCAME.

FCAME is the volunteer-run, regional chapter of the non-profit Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA), the oldest and largest consumer protection organization focused solely on guarding the rights and wallets of grieving consumers. FCA and its affiliates take no money from the death care industry or the government.

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