

March 26, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information on House Bill 1555 - Funeral Establishments, Crematories, and Reduction Facilities - Oversight (Ensuring Dignity and Accountability in Crematory and Funeral Home Operations Act)

Madame Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Finance committee, thank you for your commitment to the issues in House Bill 1555. On January 30, 2025, Governor Wes Moore asked me, Charles Scheeler, to conduct a “top to bottom” operational review of the Board of Morticians and Funeral Directors. I want to thank the current and former Board members and staff, MDH personnel, Attorney General’s Office counsel, MSFDA leadership and others who generously shared their thoughts and time. From my work, I developed eighteen recommendations. I understand that my written report has been shared with you.

Of the eighteen recommendations, I have labeled four as “urgent”. Collectively, these four recommendations are designed to ensure that the Board maintains a sufficient and qualified staff and has the legal authority it needs to to order a binding suspension or revocation of a license where appropriate. The four urgent recommendations are listed below:

1. The Secretary should be responsible for Staff personnel matters, subject to input from the Board members. The Board should have discretion to delegate authority to staff as appropriate.
2. The Board should work with MDH and the Department of Budget and Management to staff a second inspector/investigator position to assist with the Board’s expanded workload.
3. Ann. Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article Section 7-320(c) should be repealed
4. The Board should establish a policy whereby all funeral establishments on probation are inspected at least twice per year and quarterly if possible.

Charlie Scheeler serves as the Chair of Rosedale Federal Savings and Loan Association, Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, and the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority. He is a retired partner at DLA Piper LLC. He practiced law for almost 40 years, including five years as a federal prosecutor.

Please reach out to the Governor’s Office for questions or additional information at june.chung@maryland.gov or maureen.regan@maryland.gov.