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March 6, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk, Chair
Maryland House of Delegates,
Health and Government Operations Committee
241 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 1051 - Morticians and Funeral Directors – Not-For-Profit Funeral Establishments
SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk:

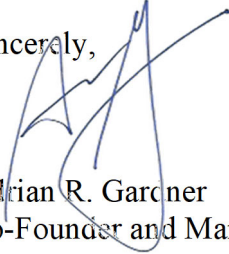
This letter is to register our **support** for SB 957 - Morticians and Funeral Directors – Not-For-Profit Funeral Establishments.

For various reasons, Maryland law has developed a blanket prohibition against corporate ownership of funeral establishment licenses – that is, except for 58 licenses which the state grandfathered in 1945. *Brown v. Hovatter*, 561 F.3d 357 (4th Cir. 2009), *cert. denied* 130 S. Ct. 741 (2009). SB 957 would create a new exception to this rule to allow funeral establishment licensing for public charities, private foundations, or private operating foundations that qualify for tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

As a business organization that aspires to deliver earth-friendly – i.e., “green” – funeral options for families in the DMV, we support measures that enable families to select green faith-based options, which many conventional funeral homes simply do not provide. In our view, the legislation will give funeral consumers more options and serves the public interest for that reason.

We accordingly urge your favorable report on HB 1051.

Sincerely,



Adrian R. Gardner
Co-Founder and Managing Member