



## Maryland State Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

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### House Bill 1445 (2025)

#### Before the House Judiciary Committee

#### Position of the Maryland State Funeral Directors Association, Inc.: UNFAVORABLE

- Since 1919 The Maryland State Funeral Directors Association Inc. has been dedicated to professionalism, integrity, and the highest ethical standards in funeral service in Maryland. Our membership is comprised of funeral service professionals who have committed their lives to serving the needs of the families of Maryland at the time of death of a loved one.
- House Bill 1445 (2025) mandates Funeral Service Professionals provide a fact sheet from the Department of Housing to the immediate family members of the Deceased about legal issues “related to deeds, heirs, and the ownership of residential real property.” (See proposed 7-407.1(C) in conjunction with 7-407.1(B)(I)) of Health Occupations Article).
- The imposition of a legal duty upon funeral directors to provide a fact sheet “related to deeds, heirs, and the ownership of residential real property” to the immediate family of the deceased is wholly inappropriate and unduly burdensome.
- The funeral arrangement conference is already a highly stressful and emotional event for a grieving family. It would be inappropriate for the funeral director or mortician to hand members of the immediate family a fact sheet regarding real property that is not the concern of a funeral director.
- The distribution of such a fact sheet regarding real property during the arrangement conference has the high probability of being perceived as offensive, intrusive, and not the reason the family selected the services of that funeral establishment.
- The distribution of a fact sheet regarding real property during the arrangement conference will, more likely than not, cause the immediate family to ask questions the funeral director is neither trained, nor licensed, to answer. Moreover, the distribution of such a fact sheet, could cause the arrangement conference to spiral out of control, into an argument over real property, remaindermen, life estates, and heirs, especially if an heir’s interests in real property, whether actual or perceived, are already a source of disagreement and tension among family members.
- Making erroneous statements upon which the immediate family members rely could expose the funeral establishment and the funeral directors to potential legal liability.
- Imposition of this duty, and the fact that any subsequent failure to provide the fact sheet would constitute a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine and or imprisonment not exceeding one year pursuant to 7-508 of Health Occupations of the Annotated Code of Maryland is unreasonable and prima facie evidence the implications of House Bill 1445 (2025), as written, have not been fully examined.
- For the aforementioned reasons, the Maryland State Funeral Directors Association, Inc. strenuously opposes House Bill 1445 (2025) and respectfully requests that the House Judiciary Committee issue an **unfavorable** report.