



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU0l1WSdNHoXUz2uYdt4zf-ztmwuTz-rdKJ59WbJstj1Ylw/viewform>

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March 10 2026

## HB 1402 - FWA

Medical Examiner - Release of Body - Requirements for Muslims

Dear Chair [Heather Bagnall](#), **Vice Chair** [Bonnie Cullison](#), and Members of the Health Committee,

This bill is making a substantial and unjustifiable mistake by explicitly declaring that it applies only to Muslims. Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim funerals are *all* supposed to occur as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours. So why does this bill propose that only when a body was that of a Muslim, and only when an Imam or mosque confirms that the body was that of a Muslim, will the law require release of a body from an autopsy within 48 hours? Freedom of conscience necessarily applies to everyone. If this proposed modification to Maryland law is good for Muslims, then it is likewise good for Hindus, Jews, and for *anyone* else who, *for whatever reason*, wants a prompt burial. The laws should be written to apply equally to everyone accordingly. Furthermore, it is easy to modify this bill so that the provisions apply to anyone.

Replace “ON RECEIPT OF NOTICE THAT A DECEASED INDIVIDUAL WAS MUSLIM”  with “ON RECEIPT OF NOTICE THAT A DECEASED INDIVIDUAL REQUESTED A PROMPT BURIAL”. Also, delete provisions (B)(4) and (B)(5) from this bill. Maybe also allow for unusual contexts where all bodies cannot be autopsied within 48 hours. Then enact this bill. However, without these improvements Secular Maryland urges a no vote on this bill.

Respectfully,  
Mathew Goldstein  
3838 Early Glow Ln  
Bowie, MD