

Funeral Consumer Needs and Rights

*An information sheet for North Carolina legislators from
Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Piedmont*

Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Piedmont, one of five FCA chapters in North Carolina, has formed a legislative advocacy task force to track legislation and to advise lawmakers on matters that affect funeral consumers. We especially aim to acquaint consumer-friendly legislators with our priorities and concerns in advance of proposals that affect families' rights and options related to funeral goods and services.

In particular:

We advocate increased funeral consumer representation on the North Carolina Board of Funeral Service and the North Carolina Cemetery Commission. Only two positions out of nine on each of these bodies are reserved for public members without financial ties to the funeral industry, yet these boards are intended to safeguard the public health, safety and welfare. We favor measures that would make public members the majority on these bodies and thereby help the board be responsive to consumer interests.

We favor steps to encourage the development of more "green" burial options, including natural cemeteries. Natural cemeteries reduce the human imprint and free open space for public benefit by encouraging burial practices that are environmentally sustainable. We favor creative initiatives that will encourage public-private partnerships in this area.

We are concerned about the unregulated commercial trade of body parts. The Federal Drug Administration and the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act regulate organ and tissue donations for medical transplants, but a lack of transparency and consumer protections exist for the growing trade in body parts for other purposes.

We support the continued right of families in North Carolina to care for their own dead until burial or cremation when that is their desire. North Carolina is a leader in the small but growing home funeral movement in America that seeks to reclaim the wholesome, respectful and affordable practice of caring for a loved one's remains until burial or cremation.

Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Piedmont is a grassroots, volunteer-staffed, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit association of funeral consumers in the Piedmont Triad.

For more information:

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