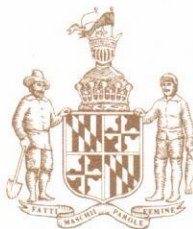


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Health and Government Operations
Committee

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair, honorable members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, I am here to present **HB1229 - Public Health - Disposition of Remains - Authorizing Agent**.

Under current Maryland law, individuals, through their last will and testament, are able to designate someone to make decisions regarding the disposition of their bodily remains (or, alternatively, to leave instructions for the disposal). However, if their authorizing agent was selected by means other than a will, as in the case of an advanced medical directive, the statute is unclear whether the orders given to the authorizing agent supersede the right of certain family members to make decisions regarding disposition of remains.

The confusion created by this lack of clarification is something that funeral directors and morticians wish to put an end to. They seek clarifying rules to help with these situations and create a clear order of priorities regarding the disposition of remains.

With this bill we hope to help add clarifying language which would give the designated authorizing agents priority in these circumstances and alleviate the confusion. This would be whether the authorizing agent is selected through a last will and testament, medical directive, or other means.

Furthermore, this bill would also make clear that an authorizing agent is bound by any contract that the decedent may have entered into with a funeral home, crematory, or cemetery prior.

Thank you for your time. I urge a favorable report for **HB1229**.