



# ***Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs***

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*Protecting a consumer's right to a meaningful, dignified, and affordable funeral.*

## **Montgomery County Council Testimony on ZTA-25-09 Alkaline Hydrolysis**

### **Position: Support**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony from the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs (FCAME) in support of Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 25-09, Funeral and Interment Services - Alkaline Hydrolysis, which would allow funeral homes in the County to conduct alkaline hydrolysis on their premises as an accessory use.

Alkaline hydrolysis, which was legalized in Maryland in 2024, offers Maryland consumers an option for a more environmentally friendly alternative to traditional, "flame" cremation. Alkaline hydrolysis uses less energy than flame cremation, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and does not emit potentially toxic chemicals into the air. It avoids the use of metal and concrete as well as toxic embalming chemicals typically used for in-ground burials and does not require the allocation of scarce land resources for cemeteries. In addition, cremation in general is far less costly than in-ground burial and alkaline hydrolysis can be offered at a price that is competitive with flame cremation.

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs supports increased options for after-death care for Maryland residents. We particularly support options that are environmentally friendly and cost effective. Alkaline hydrolysis has been well received where it is available in other states.

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Maryland and Environs enthusiastically recommends adoption of the proposed zoning amendment.

Testimony submitted by Barbara Blaylock, President of FCAME.

*FCAME is the volunteer-run, regional chapter of the non-profit Funeral Consumers Alliance (FCA), the oldest and largest consumer protection organization focused solely on guarding the rights and wallets of grieving consumers. FCA and its affiliates take no money from the death care industry or the government.*

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