

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr., Chair  
House Committee on Corporations  
State House  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02908



**RI Department of Health**  
Three Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5097

TTY: 771  
[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

RE: H 5110 – An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Funeral Director/Embalmer and Funeral Home Establishments

Dear Chair Solomon:

Please accept this letter revised regarding H 5110, legislation that would provide for the operation and duties of natural organic reduction for the contained, accelerated conversion of human remains to soil as well as alkaline hydrolysis. Disposition facilities would be used for either cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic reduction. Please accept this letter as a replacement for the letter RIDOH submitted to the Committee on February 4, 2025.

As noted in its previous letter, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is in strong conceptual support of natural organic reduction and alkaline hydrolysis, which aims to reduce the environmental impact of burial. Natural organic reduction reduces a body to organic material before, or instead of, burial by using non-toxic means to create soil rather than using toxic means to create ash.

Also as noted in its previous letter, RIDOH would require additional funding to license this new class of disposition facilities and provide staff support to the proposed new work, including at least one additional FTE, at a total annual estimated cost of \$111,707 (salary and benefits) and a subject matter expert to inspect the facilities. The current funeral home and crematory inspector is contracted at \$200 per inspection.

Before any systems changes can be made, it is critical to identify and secure the funding necessary to make and sustain the changes. In the absence of such funding, RIDOH is not able to support this bill. However, RIDOH is willing and interested in working with the sponsors to improve the current proposed legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerome M. Larkin" followed by a small "for" and a flourish.

Jerome M. Larkin, MD  
Director

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations  
The Honorable Michelle McGaw  
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Chief Legal Counsel  
Lynne Urbani, Director of House Policy