

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

I, Erin McIntosh, am pleased to offer my support for HB 2574.

Current commercial burial and cremation options in our state do not allow for a sustainable return to the earth. Cemeteries require prime real estate in our cities, where the land that could be used for community green spaces or affordable housing is filled with non-degradable caskets and the dead who have been processed with toxic embalming chemicals that eventually leak into our waterways and soil.

Many believe cremation to solve these problems, but in reality, our bodies are made mostly of water and it takes 3 hours of burning to become ash. The energy required and carbon dioxide emissions produced is staggering - about 534.6 pounds of carbon dioxide per body. With the wildfires coming further north into our state each year, allowing cremation alternatives is one way to address our changing air quality.

Both of these methods, casket burial and cremation, have detrimental impacts on our land, water, and air. The natural beauty of Oregon is what makes it precious and valuable to those of us that call the state home and the many tourists that visit our lands to recreate in nature and in our cities each year.

We come from life, and we are the conduit into other life. Having the option to become life-nourishing soil after death, through clean, safe, professional methods, is something I have been dreaming about for years. I'm also very excited about the potential for creating a new industry and eco-centered job opportunities in our communities through natural organic reduction (human composting). This is the future I want to see in Oregon for myself, my family, and my friends.

I ask for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Erin McIntosh
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