

Dear Chair Patterson and Members of the Committee,

I, Caitriona Johnston, am thrilled to offer my fervent support for HB 2574.

Since childhood, I have had a complex understanding and struggle with death. I lost a lot of people whom I cared for very much at a long age and since that loss, I have been haunted by our culture's behavior around death and bodies. I firmly believe that increasing the breadth of what people are allowed to do with their loved ones after death is a huge step in shifting our cultural taboos around death. These taboos only harm. There is no reason why we shouldn't be allowed to take care of our loved ones after death the way they would have preferred and in a way that impacts our environment in a less harmful manner. Current death practices in the United States are so incredibly influenced by the funeral industry. Grieving families are told that their only options are either to put the body in a concrete hole in the ground, filled with chemicals and rare woods, or to have the body cremated; a process that is, as it is practiced now, incredibly energy inefficient. Please give the good people of The State of Oregon the chance to find another option. Allow them to be returned to earth. Let them have the liberty to choose to return to the natural cycle after their lives have come to an end.

I wholeheartedly ask you to support this imperative legislation.

Sincerely,

Caitriona Johnston

Portland, OR
District 1
971-409-0212
caitriona.johnston@gmail.com