

For the backstory on Montana's war on affordable funerals, see:

[Montana Funeral Directors Try to Shut Down Competition](#)

[Montana: The Divine Right of Undertakers II](#)

The state's funeral industry and its regulatory handmaidens just won't quit. The latest? [Proposed revisions to the Board of Funeral Service's regulations](#) that would sneakily put low-cost, direct-to-consumer crematories out of business. How? By making it illegal for a crematory operator to do the most basic, necessary tasks on his own :

- Crematory operators would be barred from removing pacemakers (which state law requires, and which could blow up if not removed before cremation) *unless* they did so in a fully-equipped embalming room in a full-service mortuary. This would be like offering a Jiffy Lube from changing a car's oil unless it did so in a full-service car dealership with diagnostic computers and emissions-control equipment.

Since no full-service mortuary is going to let a crematory competitor use its embalming room, or would charge a fee, or since the embalming room would be physically distant, this effectively prohibits cremation businesses from operating independent of a competitor.

- Crematory operators could not even wash, dress, or comb the hair of a deceased person outside the walls of a full-embalming suite at a full-service mortuary.

- Anyone selling any kind of funeral—full-service, basic, or cremation-only—could only discuss it with the customer within the *physical building of a full service funeral home or branch* , unless otherwise requested by the customer. No, it doesn't make much sense to us either, but it appears to be another way to make business impossible for honest, reasonably priced businesses like [Central Montana Crematorium](#)

[Here's our letter to the state board](#) , which we've also sent to the Governor's office.