

**1/12/2009** - A misguided bill in 2007 significantly restricted the rights of families and religious groups to care for their own dead without the involvement of a commercial funeral home. Green burial activist Theresa Purcell, founder of the Natural Burial Project in Minnesota, is bringing together concerned people who want to return those rights to ordinary citizens. If you want to help with the effort, email her at **theresakay [at] gmail.com**. She's getting ready for a meeting with sympathetic lawmakers, so now's the time to contact her. You can also email us at FCA at [fca@funerals.org](mailto:fca@funerals.org) for more information.

Funeral Consumers Alliance and the Funeral Ethics Organization wrote a [joint letter to Minnesota lawmakers asking for revisions to the law](#).

Here's what we're asking for:

1. Return families' rights to work together to prepare, transport, and dispose of the bodies of their dead.
2. Require hospitals to release deceased bodies promptly to family members with the legal right under state law to control disposition.
3. Eliminate the ridiculous requirement that bodies on public display be embalmed. Minnesota is the only state in the nation with this requirement.
4. Eliminate the irrational requirement that all vehicles used to transport bodies keep the casket in the same cab as the driver. This is a backdoor way of ensuring that only hearses - not the family truck, for example - can be used to transport bodies. This is inappropriate and unenforceable.
5. Reverse the prohibition on family members being present in the embalming room. While few families want to be there, the next of kin should have the right to supervise the preparation of their dead. For some, it may be an emotionally necessary final act.

