

National Human Rights Consultation Submission

AGWW-7QF2DB

Organisation: Australian Citizen

Submission Text:

(1) Which human rights should be protected and promoted?

The funeral industry in Australia should be regulated. Deceased persons deserve and should be treated with respect, dignity and care. Funerals affect families and communities who should also be treated with respect and dignity.

(2) Are these human rights currently sufficiently protected and promoted?

No. There is no protection because the funeral industry is not regulated in Australia. There is little specific legislation Australia-wide and funeral directors are not licensed. In Queensland, the funeral industry is not regulated and my Local Member intends to pursue the matter in 2009, following my family raising serious concerns and questions about the severe deterioration of my brother's body. Subsequently, much to the continued extreme distress and grief of my family, we were not able to view my brother or have my brother dressed for his funeral. We are still seeking answers, but are being stonewalled by all relevant parties.

(3) How could Australia better protect and promote human rights?

By regulating the funeral industry and licensing funeral directors. Australians have a right to question the funeral industry and its services and Australians have a right to receive answers. Funerals affect all people and communities at some time every year. Deceased persons deserve respect, dignity and care. Families, relatives and friends have a human right to decide whether or not to view the body of a loved one. A funeral company is not entitled to remove this human right because of unacceptable and/or inadequate funeral practices leading to severe deterioration of a body, so much so that the body is not able to be viewed or dressed.