

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**FAMILY OF PATRICIA HILL SETTLES LAWSUIT WITH STATE OF MARYLAND
OVER UNLAWFUL CREMATION**

Baltimore, Maryland – The family of Patricia Hill has reached a settlement with the State of Maryland and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) for \$150,000 over the unlawful cremation of Ms. Hill's body without their permission or knowledge.

Patricia Hill, a 57-year-old African American woman, was found deceased in a rental vehicle on April 21, 2022. Her body was taken by the OCME, where an employee contacted her son on May 10, 2022, and informed him that the body was scheduled for the "anatomy board." The son requested that the body be released to a funeral home, and the OCME employee assured him that it was still available. However, on May 11, 2022, the family learned from the funeral director that Ms. Hill's body had already been cremated without their consent or knowledge.

The lawsuit alleged that the OCME's actions caused severe emotional distress and trauma to Ms. Hill's family. The family's attorneys, Kim Parker and Governor Jackson, stated that "the unnecessary and unlawful cremation of our client's loved one has caused immense and irreparable emotional pain and suffering. Cremating a deceased individual against the wishes of the next of kin goes against basic human decency and violates legal and ethical norms."

"We are satisfied with this settlement, which provides closure for our clients and avoids the need for further protracted litigation," said Kim Parker, lead attorney for the family. "While no amount of money can fully compensate for the harm caused by the OCME's actions, we believe this settlement is a fair resolution that acknowledges the suffering endured by Ms. Hill's family. We hope that this case will serve as a wake-up call for the death care industry to implement improved processes and technologies to prevent similar incidents in the future."

This case highlights the disturbing frequency of cremation errors where the wrong body is incinerated or cremation occurs without consent from next of kin. These incidents leave grieving families with further trauma and without the chance to properly lay their loved one to rest.

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