

Utah bill would allow human composting as alternative to traditional burial

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[video not excerpted]

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SALT LAKE CITY (KUTV) — A new bill has been introduced in Utah that proposes natural organic reduction, also known as human composting, as an alternative to traditional burial methods. This option, already available in at least seven other states, is now up for possible debate in the Utah legislature.

Upon hearing of the bill, Roy resident Jared Anderson noted the emotional connection many feel to the earth.

"A lot of people feel really connected to the earth and want to return to it," he said.

Senate Bill 102, if passed, would allow Utahns the choice of natural organic reduction, essentially converting human remains into composting soil.

"If there's not any downstream effects, yeah, I think it's a great idea," Anderson said.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Jen Plumb, D-Salt Lake, said she filed this legislation after hearing about it from constituents. She explained that the process, also known as terramation, would take place in licensed funeral homes.

"It is doing with a bit more speed what would normally happen," Plumb said.

She said the process uses a lot less energy and doesn't require the use of land.

It's hard to think about when you're gone and if you think about it in a way that you feel okay about, I feel like somehow that lessens that"
Plumb said.

However, there are limitations. This option would not be available in cases of death from Ebola, tuberculosis or prion diseases.

Plumb emphasized the need for caution, saying, "Allowing a new process means you have to be as smart as you can be and as thoughtful and as cautious as you can be."

Terramation not only conserves energy but also provides families with soil from their loved ones, which can be safely scattered. If the bill is approved, it would become law on May 1.

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