

# CRISTINA GARCIA

ASSEMBLY MEMBER

58TH DISTRICT

CAPITOL OFFICE  
P.O. Box 942849  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0058  
PHONE: (916) 319-2058

E-MAIL: [ASSEMBLYMEMBER.GARCIA@ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV](mailto:ASSEMBLYMEMBER.GARCIA@ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV)



DISTRICT OFFICE  
8255 FIRESTONE BLVD SUITE 203  
DOWNEY, CA 90241  
PHONE: (562) 861-5803  
WEBSITE: [WWW.ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV/GARCIA](http://WWW.ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV/GARCIA)

## Press Release

June 13, 2022

Contact: Ashley Labar  
(916) 319-2767 or (925) 719-1298 Cell

### ASSEMBLY BILL 351 – BURIAL REMAINS, PASSED IN SENATE BUSINESS, PROFESSIONS, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**(Sacramento)** – Assemblymember Cristina Garcia’s (D-Bell Gardens) Assembly Bill 351 passed out of the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee earlier today on a vote of 10-0 and will be heard in the Senate Health Committee next.

The approach, known as natural organic reduction (NOR) or the reduction of human remains, involves placing bodies in individual vessels and fostering gentle transformation into a nutrient-dense soil that can then be returned to families or donated to conservation land. The result is a completely safe and economical method of final disposition that offers additional choice for people to direct their final wishes. The process is proven more environmentally sound than burial, which can leach chemicals into the ground, or cremation, which uses fossil fuels and releases earth-warming carbon dioxide.

“AB 351 will provide an additional option for California residents that is more environmentally-friendly and gives them another choice for burial,” commented Garcia. “With climate change and sea-level rise as very real threats to our environment, this is an alternative method of final disposition that won’t contribute emissions into our atmosphere.” For each individual who chooses NOR over conventional burial or cremation, the process saves the equivalent of one metric ton of carbon from entering the environment.

“It’s not easy to think about after-death choices. Natural organic reduction is safe, sustainable, and informed by nature. This process would provide Californians an option that offers significant savings in carbon emissions and land usage over conventional burial or cremation,” said Recompose CEO and founder Katrina Spade, inventor of NOR. Recompose is a death care company who has just begun offering natural organic reduction services since 2020. “We look forward to working with Assemblymember Garcia and our supporters in California to make NOR available to all Californians who want it.”

As cemeteries fill up and people look for more sustainable death care practices, Recompose hopes to one day offer its service to the California public, so that friends and family can use the soil to plant a tree or memorial garden honoring loved ones.

“Trees are important carbon breaks for the environment,” said Garcia. “They are the best filters for air quality and if more people participate in organic reduction and tree-planting, we can help with California’s carbon footprint. I look forward to continuing my legacy to fight for clean air by using my reduced remains to plant a tree.”

This is the Assemblymember's third attempt at passing the bill, but she is confident that this is the right policy at the right time. Washington, Colorado, Oregon, and Vermont have already passed laws allowing NOR. "In 2020 we witnessed SouthCoast Air Quality Management District suspend cremation limits traditionally set to limit harmful emissions from filling our air, due to the COVID 19 pandemic. This is another sad reminder that we must legalize a more environmentally friendly option as soon as possible," concluded Assemblymember Garcia.

### **About Natural Organic Reduction:**

Natural organic reduction offers an additional choice for after-death care that is natural and sustainable. With significant savings in carbon emissions and land usage, it addresses increasing demand for green alternatives:

- California's rate of cremation was 66.7 percent for 2018, [according to](#) estimates by the National Funeral Directors Association. But cremation requires fossil fuels and emits CO2 into the atmosphere, polluting and contributing to climate change.
- If every California resident chose natural reduction as their after-death preference, we would save nearly 2.5 million metric tons of CO2 in just 10 years. That's carbon-savings equivalent of the energy required to power 225,000 homes for one year or the letting 65 million seedlings grow into trees over 10 years
- To underscore the safety and viability of the natural organic reduction process, Recompose collaborated with Dr. Lynne Carpenter-Boggs, professor of Soil Science at the College of Agriculture, Humans, and Natural Resources Sciences at Washington State University. This 2018 scientific study found all safety thresholds were met, heavy metals were well under EPA limits, and over 95% reduction in pharmaceuticals that were tracked during the study.

###

**The 58<sup>th</sup> Assembly District includes the cities of Montebello, Pico Rivera, Commerce, Bell Gardens, Downey, Norwalk, Bellflower, Cerritos and Artesia.**