

Most folks are unaware that many of the cemeteries or memorial gardens out there today are owned and managed by large corporations. It should come as no surprise then that the corporate owned memorial garden is concerned primarily with turning a profit. In fact, these corporate companies have spent a lot of time and money in recent years lobbying behind the government scenes trying to create new laws and rules limiting consumer choices when it comes to gravesites and monuments. The bottom line is this: the corporations want to cut out the traditional family owned monument companies and create an environment where you are forced to buy from them and no one else.

The Florida Monument Builder's Association, a group of independent monument dealer/installers throughout the state (which Ocala Marble & Granite Works is a member), has spent years trying to fight these corporate monopolies from succeeding.

At Ocala Granite & Marble Works, we continue to hear many stories from families telling us about being pressured to buy their monument from the memorial garden where they are purchasing a gravesite. Often, these sales people at the memorial gardens tell misleading information in an effort to persuade unknowledgeable people about what they can and cannot do regarding the purchase of a monument for their loved one. A common falsehood the sales people tell is that the family is not allowed to purchase their monument from any other source – that the corporate rules of the memorial gardens does not allow it. This is simply false. In addition, they are often told that if the family does purchase their monument elsewhere, the gravesite will not be cared for or maintained. This is also false.

Florida state law is clear. Consumers have the right to purchase their monument from any source they wish. The corporate owned cemetery or memorial garden cannot impede it. Also, they cannot deny you maintenance or care.

Elsewhere on our website, we have included a link to [www.MyFloridaCFO.com](http://www.MyFloridaCFO.com) - where all of your consumer rights regarding Funeral and Cemetery issues are clearly spelled out. They have an excellent Frequently Asked Questions section.

According to Florida Cemetery Law – Chapter 497.041 Florida Status – No person who is authorized to sell grave space and no cemetery company shall:

1. Require the payment of a setting or service charge.
2. Refuse to provide care or maintenance for any portion of a gravesite on which a monument has been placed; or
3. Waive liability with respect to damage to a monument after installation.

In other words, cemeteries and memorial gardens cannot refuse these services if you purchase

your monument or marker elsewhere. But as we've learned, families are often told just the opposite. Don't be fooled. Be sure you know the truth about your rights.

If you have any questions regarding your rights when it comes to placing a monument, memorial or marker in the state of Florida, please don't hesitate to call us at 352-622-8649. We will be happy to help you in any way we can.