



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 198

January Session, 2003

House Bill No. 6468

House of Representatives, April 7, 2003

The Committee on General Law reported through REP. FOX of the 144th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING FUNERAL AND BURIAL PLOT ALLOWANCES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17b-91 of the general statutes is amended by
2 adding subsection (f) as follows (*Effective October 1, 2003*):

3 (NEW) (f) The exclusion for the burial fund amount in subsection (a)
4 of this section, the exclusion for the burial plot value in subsection (b)
5 of this section and the exclusion for the irrevocable funeral contract
6 value in subsection (c) of this section shall be applied by the
7 commissioner uniformly throughout the state.

This act shall take effect as follows:

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Section 1 | <i>October 1, 2003</i> |
|-----------|------------------------|

GL *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

This bill requires that all offices of the Department of Social Services be consistent in the treatment of burial space items when determining eligibility for Temporary Family Assistance and Supplemental Assistance. This is not anticipated to result in any fiscal impact.

OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6468

AN ACT CONCERNING FUNERAL AND BURIAL PLOT ALLOWANCES**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to apply certain asset exclusions uniformly throughout the state when determining eligibility for the State Supplement and Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) programs. These are the exclusion for a burial fund amount (\$1,200), the value of a burial plot, and the value of an irrevocable funeral contract (by law, limited to \$5,400). By statute, the \$1,200 burial fund amount is reduced by the value of a revocable or irrevocable funeral contract and the face value of a life insurance policy that the client may own.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2003

BACKGROUND***Variable Treatment of Asset Exclusions***

Apparently, regional DSS offices treat these exclusions differently. For example, some define burial plot broadly to include other funeral-related items. The current definition is "a grave site, crypt, mausoleum, cremation urn, or any other repository traditionally used for the remains of a deceased person" (Connecticut Uniform Policy Manual, § 4000.01). DSS has proposed regulations that would define burial plot narrowly to include a grave site, crypt, mausoleum or niche, and a headstone or marker, but not personal property, funeral services, or funeral merchandise such as a casket. The regulatory change would apply to the programs in the bill as well as Medicaid and the Food Stamp program.

State Supplement Program

Needy people who are aged, blind, or disabled can qualify for State Supplement benefits, regardless of whether they are also receiving

federal Supplemental Security Income benefits. Certain assets are excluded in determining eligibility.

Temporary Family Assistance Program

TFA is the cash assistance component of the state's Jobs First program. It generally provides up to 21 months of assistance to needy pregnant women and families with children. Eligibility is based on a number of factors such as family income, assets, and age of the children. Certain assets are excluded in determining eligibility.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 17 Nay 0