



House of Representatives

File No. 629

General Assembly

January Session, 2003

(Reprint of File No. 198)

House Bill No. 6468
As Amended by House
Amendment Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 2, 2003

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. For the purposes of this
8 section, "burial plot" means a grave site, crypt, mausoleum or niche,
9 cremation urn or any other repository traditionally used for the
10 remains of a deceased person and a headstone or marker.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	October 1, 2003

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 as amended 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.

House "A" made clarifying changes that had no fiscal impact.

OLR Amended Bill Analysis

HB 6468 (as amended by House "A")*

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.

The bill defines "burial plot" as a gravesite, crypt, mausoleum or niche, crematorium urn, or any other repository traditionally used for the remains of a deceased person, and a headstone or marker.

*House Amendment "A" adds the definition of "burial plot."

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.

Legislative History

On April 14, the House referred the bill (File 198) to the Human Services Committee, which reported it favorably with no changes on April 24.

COMMITTEE ACTION

General Law Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 17 Nay 0

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Report
Yea 16 Nay 0