



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

REPRESENTATIVE BRENDA L. KUPCHICK
ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ROOM 4200
300 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

TOLL FREE: (800) 842-1423
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8700
HOME: (203) 336-1724
Brenda.Kupchick@cga.ct.gov

MEMBER
HOUSING COMMITTEE
PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Testimony

In support of H.B. 5244 An Act Concerning the Provision of Certain Beverages and Food at Funeral Homes

Public Health Committee
February 20, 2013

Dear Senator Gerratana, Senator Welch, Representative Johnson, and Representative Srinivasan and members of the Public Health Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB5244, An Act Concerning The Provision of Certain Beverages and Food at Funeral Homes.

Last Spring, I formed a Business Advisory Task Force with Senator McKinney that includes a variety of local businesses owners from Fairfield. We had a wide array of participants from restaurants, dentists, to a small grocery store, liquor stores, a long time jeweler, a funeral home director, and myself -- a legislator and co-owner of a small heating and cooling company.

I began with a survey sent to over 1200 businesses in my town asking them for feedback on the challenges they face, and what would make it easier for them to run their business.

The council met every six weeks and discussed varying issues each business faces and we brainstormed ideas to make commonsense changes that would improve their ability to run and grow their business which would be good for them and for the local economy.

One of the issues brought up was from council member, Kevin Lesko, owner of Lesko Funeral Home was their inability to offer beverages to the families who use their service.

Mr. Lesko said it would be very helpful to him if he could offer a simple beverage, a cup of coffee, tea or soda to families. I hadn't ever thought about why those items weren't available at a funeral home until he said funeral homes aren't allowed to serve them.

I realized then why when using the services of a funeral home, families send out for a cup of coffee, tea etc. while waking their loved ones.

I don't view this as bill as an economic boom for funeral homes or even a requirement but rather a convenience for families.

It makes perfect sense to me to allow funeral homes to offer a warm cup of coffee or tea to families who are going through this very difficult process, very similar to what any of us would do when a guest or family member comes to our home, offer them a cup of coffee.

I understand there would be public health laws that would need to be complied with and I'm hopeful if the committee allows this bill to move forward, the Department of Public Health in conjunction with Funeral directors to come up with common sense guidelines.

I think this type of legislation is exactly how government can help, listening to constituents to find solutions.

Sincerely,

Rep. Brenda Kupchick 132nd district
Fairfield & Southport

Representative Brenda L. Kupchick
132nd Assembly District
Fairfield, Southport
860/240-8775