



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
February 20, 2013**

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**House Bill 5244 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROVISION OF CERTAIN BEVERAGES
AND FOOD AT FUNERAL HOMES**

The Department of Public Health provides the following information regarding House Bill 5244.

Funeral Homes are licensed and inspected by the Department of Public Health. Pursuant to the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Section 20-211-28, funeral homes are currently prohibited from serving food and beverages in connection with a funeral service. If enacted, this proposal would eliminate this restriction. It is assumed that any requirements concerning the serving of food and beverages in connection with a funeral service would fall within the Department's regulatory oversight. If this proposal moves forward, it would seem appropriate to include any restrictions necessary to ensure public health and safety (for example, restricting food and beverages from being stored and/or served in viewing areas and in the embalming room) within the statutes that govern funeral homes.

Additionally, local health departments have jurisdiction to regulate, inspect, and license all establishments preparing and/or serving food to the general public. The language of this bill does not specify whether or not the food would be prepared at the funeral home or whether the food would be provided from a separate regulated food service establishment. In the event that the food is prepared at the funeral home, the preparation would need to meet the minimum requirements of 19-13-B42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. If the food is prepared in other regulated establishments and served at the funeral home, the service operation at the funeral home would need to meet the minimum requirements regarding serving of such food and beverage as set forth in 19-13-B42 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

The Department of Public Health has worked with interested stakeholders and opponents of this proposal in the past and would be pleased to continue to do so. Should this bill move forward, the Department of Public Health respectfully request the opportunity to participate in any discussions regarding revised statutory language to ensure that any public health and safety concerns are addressed and that implementation of the proposal has no fiscal impact to the Department.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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