

**CT Funeral Directors Association, Inc.**

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Written Testimony of  
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**Proposed Bill H.B. No. 6340, An Act Concerning Funeral Processions**  
Transportation Committee Public Hearing  
February 23, 2015

Good day, Senator Maynard, Rep. Guerrero, Senator Boucher, Representative O'Dea and the distinguished members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Nicole Paquette. Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association (CFDA). This is my 20th year of having practical experience as both a funeral director and embalmer and I have lead funeral processions on streets and highways throughout Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Connecticut Funeral Directors Association respectfully opposes this Proposed House Bill 6061.

Unforeseen accidents and events occur involving funeral processions. The legal right of way will not improve the safety to the operators in the procession or those who may coincidentally come in contact with it. It will also not ensure that this right will absolutely be granted by others. We know that existing statutes concerning motor vehicle operators are readily ignored (i.e. texting while driving). Today, motorists customarily yield to the funeral procession as a courtesy. It would be reasonable to anticipate that those who do not courteously yield today will likely not yield even with the threat of an infraction. We feel that this action can increase the risk of harm to the procession participants and others who come in contact with it. Therefore, all operators must **exercise due care** when participating in a funeral procession, by **requiring those operators to obey existing motor vehicle laws in order to provide protection for themselves and the members of the public.**

This well intended proposal inherently comes with a set of unforeseen risks and potential liabilities upon the public, funeral homes and their staff. Funeral Directors currently take steps to help promote the safety of the participants of the funeral procession. This is often accomplished by the use of verbal instruction, brochures, illuminated head and tail lamps, flashing lights, magnetic signs, hand-help STOP signs and the assistance of local police departments when necessary. We applaud the idea of requiring any motor vehicle operator in a funeral procession to have head and tail lamps illuminated and flashing lights activated.

In conclusion, CFDA believes that this proposed legislation in no way ensures that motorists and/or pedestrians encountering a funeral procession will exercise due care and sound judgment. Therefore, for the **protection** of the public and those who serve them, we recommend that this legislation not be forwarded for approval by the full legislature. **The best way to insure motor vehicle safety in funeral processions is for all drivers to obey all traffic laws.**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I would be pleased to answer any questions.