

# Connecticut Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

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Written Testimony of  
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**HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments to State Expenditures for the Fiscal Year Ending  
June 30, 2017**  
Appropriations Committee  
Public Hearing  
February 11, 2016

Good Day, Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Kane, Representative Ziobron and the distinguished members of the Human Services Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Randy Molloy and I am the co-chair of the Legislative Committee for the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association (CFDA). CFDA represents 220 funeral homes in Connecticut. Thank you for considering this testimony as you deliberate over state budget cuts. We sincerely appreciate the difficult decision that face you in the coming weeks.

The Connecticut Funeral Directors Association respectfully opposes any proposal that will further reduce the Funeral and Burial Allowance of Indigent Persons. This proposal seeks a second reduction, within a year, from the current allowance of \$1,400 to \$1,000 (for the funeral and burial allowance for deceased indigent persons or beneficiaries under the state administered general assistance program). I am sure you are aware that this same allowance to care for the deceased poor was previously reduced by \$400 during the 2015 legislative session (\$1,800 to \$1,400). This new proposal would represent a nearly 50-percent overall reduction from June 2015.

CFDA is here tonight to give a voice for the people who are truly indigent and are likely unaware that this cut is even being considered. These individuals have absolutely no means to provide for their own proper burial or cremation when they die. This important, basic and human necessity allows our members, hundreds of caring licensed funeral directors, to care for and serve these individuals who are as deserving as you and I, to be treated in death with dignity and respect. Please do not place the responsibility of balancing the State's financial woes onto truly indigent by reaching into pauper's graves' to find budget dollars.

Know that many Connecticut funeral homes continue to provide limited services despite the challenge of stretching the dollars for the current \$1,400 provision. However, there are additional costs beyond the funeral home's control. (The expenses of cemetery and/or

crematory, medical examiner, permit(s), certified death certificate, probate cost for custody of remains, obituary notice, etc. Unfortunately, not all of these third party charges are reduced at an indigent rate (including the State of Connecticut fees).

CFDA has appreciated your support in the past and respectfully asks the Appropriations Committee to leave intact the already reduced allowance of \$1,400. Together let us “not forget the forgotten.”

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