

General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-848

AN ACT CONCERNING FUNERAL SERVICE CONTRACTS AND

Title: CEMETERIES.

Vote Date: 3/5/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/19/2019

File No.: 76

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Joseph Gresko, 121st Dist.

Rep. Geoff Luxenberg, 12th Dist.

Sen. Dennis Bradley, 23rd Dist.

Rep. Ben McGorty, 122nd Dist.

Rep. Jason Perillo, 113th Dist.

Rep. Douglas McCrory, 2nd Dist.

Rep. Brenda Kupchick, 132nd Dist.

Rep. Themis Klarides, 114th Dist.

Sen. George S. Logan, 17th Dist.

Rep. Mitch Bolinsky, 106th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would allow the pre-selling of space in a mausoleum or columbarium niche that are under construction. This would give families who are interested in such accommodations peace of mind for themselves and perhaps future generations, as the project would be pre-approved.

The bill would also remove the dollar cap of \$8,000 on irrevocable funeral service contracts without impacting a resident's Medicaid eligibility. Often families are left with a balance due or given the task of deciding what service items will be eliminated from their loved one's funeral. This would eliminate the cap and would remove the burden of those decisions.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Pinone, John, Executive Director, Catholic Cemeteries Association:

This bill would allow for the sale of mausoleum or columbarium niche before the completion of construction. The space would not be sold until the project is approved, which would provide families with comfort knowing the space is available. All monies collected will be

placed into an interest bearing account under DCP guidelines and held until construction is complete. The contract will also include that there will be no cost to the family for disinterment and re-interment if death of the family member happens before the completion of the facility.

Paquette, Nicole, Legislative Committee Co-Chair, Connecticut Funeral Directors Association:

Section 1 of this bill would remove the \$8,000 cap for irrevocable funeral service contract this would eliminate the burden of additional costs or having to eliminate services of a funeral for family members during a time of extreme duress. Forty two other states, including the entire Northeast and all of the other New England states do not impose a dollar cap on an irrevocable funeral service contract.

SCI-CT:

SCI-CT currently owns and operates 23 funeral homes across the state and has a long history of serving CT residents. By removing the \$8,000 cap on irrevocable funeral service contracts it would allow individuals better pre-plan their funerals based on religious beliefs, cultural wishes and budgets.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk

Date: 03/8/2019