



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **175**



Introduced by Representative MARLESA “DOC MARLY” HOFER-HASIM

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Death, while an inevitable part of life, remains a profound source of emotional and financial burden especially for poor Filipino families. The costs associated with laying a loved one to rest often force grieving families to incur debts or resort to undignified means of burial. This proposed measure seeks to alleviate such burdens by institutionalizing the provision of free funeral services to poor families.

Under this Act, accredited funeral establishments across the country shall provide free funeral services to poor families. This may include embalming, a standard casket, funeral chapel use, and transportation to the burial site

This bill recognizes that access to decent and respectful funeral services is not a privilege, but a matter of social justice. In upholding the dignity of every Filipino, even in death, the State fulfills its constitutional mandate to promote social welfare and protect the underprivileged from undue hardship.

This bill was passed in third reading in the Senate in the 19th Congress by Senator Imee Marcos.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

MARLESA “DOC MARLY” HOFER-HASIM
Representative, 2nd District of Zamboanga Sibugay



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AN ACT
GRANTING FREE FUNERAL SERVICES TO POOR FAMILIES, APPROPRIATING
FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* This Act shall be known as the “*Free Funeral Services Act*”.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that ensures the prosperity and independence of the nation and frees the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services and promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. To this end, the State shall give free funeral services to poor families who cannot afford a proper burial for their deceased.

1 **SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. –** As used in this Act:

2 (a)Funeral Establishment refers to a licensed business that provides funeral services, such
3 as funeral parlors, funeral chapels, and any similar place used in the preparation,
4 transportation, storage, and care of the body of a deceased person for burial or cremation;

5 (b)Indigent Funeral Package refers to the preparation of funeral documents, embalming,
6 interment or burial services, transport, cremation, and inurnment services, including the
7 provision of a casket, urn, or venue, as the case may be, offered by funeral establishments;
8 and

9 (c)Poor refers to those families whose income falls below the poverty threshold as defined
10 by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and/or who cannot sustain
11 or provide their minimum basic needs of food, health, education, housing, or other essential
12 amenities of life as defined under Republic Act No. 8425, otherwise known as the “Social
13 Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act”.

14
15 **SECTION 4. Coverage. –** Free funeral services shall be provided to families who are in
16 crisis situations, as determined by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD),
17 including but not limited to indigent families, or those affected by calamities, disasters, or other
18 emergency circumstances that prevent them from affording dignified funeral services.

19
20 **SECTION 5. Free Funeral Services for Poor Families. –** Free funeral services shall be
21 provided to poor families per death of a family member by accredited funeral establishments
22 anywhere in the country: Provided, That every funeral establishment shall have a uniform indigent
23 funeral package, regardless of such establishment’s type or location available to all poor families,
24 as determined by and in coordination with the DSWD.

25
26 **SECTION 6. Requirements for Availing the Indigent Funeral Package -** The bereaved
27 family or representative must present the following to avail the indigent funeral package:

28 (a)Valid identification card of the claimant or beneficiary;

29 (b) Death certificate issued by the hospital or city/municipal health office, or certification
30 from the tribal chieftain;

31 (c)Funeral contract signed by the representative of the deceased’s family, the funeral
32 establishment, and an authorized DSWD personnel; and

33 (d)Social case study prepared by any registered social worker.

1 **SECTION 7. *Lead Agency.***– The DSWD shall be the lead agency in the implementation
2 of this Act and shall engage the services of funeral establishments in the country. The Department
3 of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall monitor and regulate the current market prices of funeral
4 services, including the price of caskets and urns, to prevent undue or excessive price increases.

5
6 **SECTION 8. *Payment of Indigent Funeral Package.*** - Funeral establishments granting
7 free services to poor beneficiaries shall be paid the cost of the services by any regional office of
8 the DSWD upon the approval of the Regional Director. The payment will be based on the
9 stipulations of the signed contract between the representative of the deceased's family, the funeral
10 establishment, and the authorized DSWD personnel.

11
12 **SECTION. 9. *Prohibited Acts.***

13 The following acts shall be prohibited under this Act:

14 **(a) Refusal to Provide Services.** – Refusal or unjustified failure of any accredited
15 funeral establishment to provide the indigent funeral package to qualified beneficiaries, as
16 determined by and in coordination with the Department of Social Welfare and
17 Development (DSWD), without valid cause;

18 **(b) Overpricing and Unauthorized Charges.** – Charging of any form of fee,
19 surcharge, or hidden cost to beneficiaries or their families in connection with the indigent
20 funeral package, or imposing prices inconsistent with the uniform indigent funeral package
21 or those regulated by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);

22 **(c) Non-compliance with Contractual Obligations.** – Failure of any funeral
23 establishment to deliver the agreed-upon services as stipulated in the funeral contract
24 signed by the family representative, the funeral establishment, and the authorized DSWD
25 personnel;

26 **(d) Collusion or Fraudulent Schemes.** – Participation in any form of collusion,
27 fraud, or scheme between funeral establishments, claimants, or DSWD personnel to exploit
28 or abuse the provisions of this Act;

29 **(e) Obstruction of Implementation.** – Any act that obstructs, delays, or interferes
30 with the lawful implementation of this Act by the DSWD or its accredited funeral
31 establishment partners.

32 **(f) Misrepresentation.** – Falsification or misrepresentation by any person or party
33 of eligibility or requirements in order to avail of the benefits provided under this Act;

34
35 **SECTION 10 . *Penalties.*** – Any violation of Section 9(a-e) of this Act shall be penalized
36 with a fine not exceeding Two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00) and a suspension of license
37 to operate for a period not exceeding six (6) months. Repeated violations after the suspension of

1 its license to operate is lifted, shall be penalized with a fine not exceeding Four hundred thousand
2 pesos (P400,000.00) and revocation of such license to operate.

3 Any individual or establishment found to have fraudulently availed or facilitated the
4 availment of free funeral services under Section 9(f) of this Act through false representation,
5 document falsification, or collusion shall be penalized with imprisonment of not less than six (6)
6 months and a fine not exceeding Five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00).
7

8 **SECTION 11. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
9 this Act shall be charged against the current year’s appropriations for the Assistance to Individuals
10 in Crisis Situations (AICS) Program and other similar programs of the DSWD. Thereafter, such
11 amount needed for the continued implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual
12 General Appropriations Act.
13

14 **SECTION 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The DSWD shall promulgate the
15 implementing rules and regulations within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.
16

17 **SECTION 13. . *Separability Clause.*** – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared
18 void or unconstitutional, the remaining portions or provisions hereof shall not be affected by such
19 declaration.
20

21 **SECTION 14. . *Repealing Clause.*** – Any provision of law or regulations inconsistent
22 herewith is hereby repealed, modified, or amended accordingly.
23

24 **SECTION 15. . *Effectivity*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
25 in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

26 *Approved,*