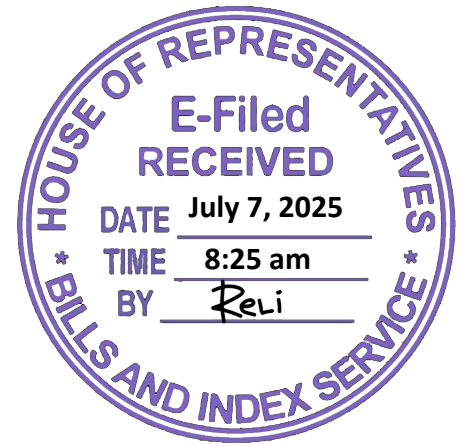




Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Twentieth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **1346**

Introduced by Representative Lordan G. Suan

AN ACT
GRANTING FREE FUNERAL SERVICES TO POOR FAMILIES AND
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to grant free funeral services to poor families and appropriate funds therefor.

A funeral is a ritualized ceremony following a death to honor, memorialize and celebrate an individual. Planning a funeral, however, can be exhausting, emotionally draining and funerals are quite expensive. While death absolves one of debt and all other financial obligations, the bereaved family often carry the burden of the cost of burial and other services on top of grief. For most Filipinos, a decent funeral is a luxury they can't afford, especially to those belonging to the poor and marginalized families.

Funeral expenses nowadays may range between P8,000.00 to P15,000.00 at the cheapest. Mid-range funeral services may cost up to P250,000.00 and high-end funeral package may cost around P300,000.00 to P500,000.00. While the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and local government units are offering burial or funeral assistance to help indigent families, this assistance is not enough to cover all funeral and related expenses incurred by the family of the deceased.

This bill seeks to alleviate the plight of the poor by providing them with free funeral services which include the preparation of funeral documents,

embalming, interment and burial services or cremation services, including the provision of a casket or urn. The DSWD shall be the lead agency and shall determine and accredit mortuaries that will provide the free funeral services. This bill also provides for penalties to ensure that mortuaries will provide the standard funeral services. Moreover, local government units are mandated to waive all fees and charges which include burial or interment permits, cremation permits, transfer permits, disinterment permits and cost of death certificate.

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



LORDAN G. SUAN



Republic of the Philippines
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1 **AN ACT**
2 **GRANTING FREE FUNERAL SERVICES TO POOR FAMILIES AND**
3 **APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

4
5 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in*
6 *Congress assembled:*
7

8 SECTION 1. ***Short Title.*** – This Act shall be known as "*Free Funeral*
9 *Services Act.*"

10 SEC. 2. ***Declaration of Policy.*** – It is the policy of the State to promote a
11 just and dynamic social order, alleviate poverty, provide adequate social
12 services and raise the standard of living to improve the quality of life for all.
13 Towards this end, the State shall provide means to alleviate the plight of the
14 poor families and uplift their dignity by providing them with free funeral
15 services.

16 SEC. 3. ***Free Funeral Services.*** – The Department of Social Welfare and
17 Development (DSWD) shall provide free funeral services to poor families

1 through accredited mortuaries. The beneficiaries are entitled to avail of the
2 mortuary's minimum funeral service package, which includes the following:

3 a. Transfer of the deceased from the place of death to the mortuary for
4 embalming and applying of cosmetics;

5 b. Ordinary plain casket with stand for viewing of body or urn in case of
6 cremation;

7 c. Two (2) to three (3) days of viewing outside the funeral chapels such as
8 the Barangay Hall or residence of the family;

9 d. Use of funeral viewing equipment including lighting and arania; and

10 e. Use of funeral vehicle for interment from the place of viewing to the
11 place of burial.

12 For purposes of this Act, *funeral services* refer to the preparation of
13 funeral documents, embalming, interment and burial services or cremation
14 services, including the provision of a casket or urn, offered by accredited
15 mortuaries. *Poor family* refers to those whose income falls below the poverty
16 threshold or who cannot afford to provide their minimum basic needs of food,
17 health, education, housing or other essential amenities of life as defined under
18 Republic Act (RA) No. 8425, otherwise known as the "*Social Reform and*
19 *Poverty Alleviation Act.*"

20 SEC. 4. **Requirements.** - To avail of the free funeral services, the
21 beneficiary family shall submit the following documents:

1 a. Certificate of indigency issued by the social welfare office in the
2 locality where the deceased resides; and

3 b. Death certificate.

4 SEC. 5. **Accreditation and Contract.** – Participating mortuaries in the free
5 funeral service program shall secure accreditation and enter into a contract with
6 the DSWD. The contract shall specify the manner by which the beneficiaries
7 may avail of the services of the mortuary and the services that the mortuary
8 shall provide, including the manner of payment of the cost of services.

9 SEC. 6. **Role of Local Government Units.** – The local government units
10 (LGUs) are enjoined to fulfill their devolved function as mandated by RA
11 7160, otherwise known as the “ *Local Government Code of 1991*,” and
12 Presidential Decree No. 856, otherwise known as the “*Code of Sanitation of the*
13 *Philippines*.” LGUs may provide assistance to poor families in their respective
14 jurisdiction at their own expense and shall waive all fees and charges in
15 connection with funeral documentation such as burial or interment permits,
16 cremation permits, transfer permits, disinterment permits and cost of death
17 certificate.

18 SEC. 7. **Penalties.** – An accredited mortuary who fails to offer free
19 funeral services and below the standard provided under Section 3 of this Act
20 shall incur the following penalties:

21 (a) First offense: A fine of Fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00);

1 (b) Second offense: Suspension of business operation for a period of one
2 (1) month and a fine of One hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00);

3 (c) Third offense: Suspension of business operation for a period of six (6)
4 year and a fine of Three hundred thousand pesos (P300,000.00); and

5 (d) Fourth offense: Cancellation or termination of business operation and
6 a fine of Five hundred pesos (P500,00.00).

7 SEC. 8. **Appropriations.** – The amount necessary for the implementation of
8 this Act shall be charged against the current year’s budget of the DSWD.
9 Thereafter, such amount as may be necessary for its continued implementation
10 shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

11 SEC. 9. **Implementing Rules and Regulations.** – Within sixty (60) days
12 from the effectivity of this Act, the Secretary of Social Welfare and
13 Development shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations for the
14 effective implementation of this Act.

15 SEC. 10. **Repealing Clause.** – All laws, executive orders, issuances, rules
16 and regulations, or parts hereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are
17 repealed or modified accordingly.

18 SEC. 11. **Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
19 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

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21 Approved,