

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9162



Introduced by: **REPRESENTATIVE ERIC L. OLIVAREZ**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Death is inevitable. Yet, for many Filipino families, the burden of laying a loved one to rest is compounded by financial constraints. In moments of grief, families are often compelled to make urgent decisions on funeral arrangements despite limited resources.

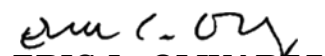
The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) reported that approximately ₱1.7 billion in burial assistance was provided to 165,907 beneficiaries under the Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) program from January to September 2024, highlighting the number of Filipino families who face difficulty in meeting funeral and burial costs.

Funeral services including caskets, embalming, transportation of remains, and related arrangements remain costly and often beyond the means of indigent households. While existing mechanisms such as the DSWD's AICS program and local government unit (LGU) assistance provide relief, these are often limited, discretionary, and insufficient to address prevailing market costs.

Consistent with the State's policy to promote consumer protection and ensure access to essential services, this measure strengthens the regulatory role of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in monitoring funeral service pricing and mandates all funeral establishments to offer affordable service packages. It likewise reinforces the role of LGUs and the DSWD in identifying qualified beneficiaries and facilitating access to available assistance, consistent with existing social protection frameworks.

This measure seeks to ensure the availability of affordable funeral services for indigent and underprivileged families by regulating costs and promoting accessible service packages. While not entirely free, it aims to prevent grieving families from incurring undue financial burden or debt.

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


ERIC L. OLIVAREZ

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AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING AFFORDABLE FUNERAL SERVICES FOR
INDIGENT FAMILIES, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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

SECTION 1. Title. – This Act shall be known as “*Affordable Funeral Service Act*”.

SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the State to promote a just and dynamic social order that will ensure the prosperity and independence of the nation and free the people from poverty through policies that provide adequate social services, promote full employment, a rising standard of living, and an improved quality of life for all. Pursuant thereto, the State shall ensure that affordable funeral services are made available to grief-stricken families, especially those classified as indigent and extremely poor.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. – The following terms as used in this Act shall mean the following:

- (a) *Funeral Services* refers to a package of goods and services offered by a funeral establishment comprised of basic embalming or mortuary services, transportation of remains, provision of a casket or coffin, wake venue and equipment, funeral hearse and transport to burial or cremation sites;
- (b) *Indigent Family* refers to a family whose monthly income is equivalent to the minimum wage set in the region where they reside;
- (c) *Extremely Poor Family* refers to a family whose income falls below the subsistence threshold as defined by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA);
- (d) *Implementing Agencies* refer to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); and

- (e) *Funeral Establishment* includes funeral parlors, funeral chapels and any similar place used in the preparation, storage and care of the body of a deceased person for burial or cremation.

SECTION 4. Availability of Affordable Funeral Services in All Funeral Establishments. All funeral establishments shall make available at all times a funeral service package for indigent families at a price not exceeding Twenty Thousand Pesos (₱20,000.00).

The package may be unbundled into individual component services; Provided, That the total cost of the selected components shall not exceed the prescribed amount, thereby allowing indigent families flexibility in choosing services.

In the event that a required service is unavailable, the funeral establishment shall provide a comparable or higher value service at no additional cost to the beneficiary.

The price ceiling shall be adjusted annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as published by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). The DTI shall conduct a comprehensive review every two (2) years to ensure that the price remains fair, reasonable, and responsive to prevailing economic conditions.

SECTION 5. Availment of Affordable Funeral Services. – The deceased indigent's family must present a *Certificate of Indigency* and a corresponding case study proving their indigent status from either the medical social service of a hospital, the local social welfare office or the DSWD.

SECTION 6. Penalties. – Any violation of this Act shall be penalized with a fine not exceeding Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱200,000.00) and suspension of the license to operate of the offending funeral establishment for a period not exceeding six (6) months.

Subsequent violations shall be penalized with a fine not exceeding Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (₱400,000.00) and revocation of the license to operate.

SECTION 7. Implementing Agencies. – The DTI shall monitor and regulate funeral service pricing and enforce compliance with this Act.

The DTI shall promulgate the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, in coordination with the DSWD and other relevant agencies.

The DSWD shall continue to provide financial assistance, where applicable, under the AICS program and shall assist in identifying qualified beneficiaries and facilitating access to services.

SECTION 8. Appropriations. – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the departments and agencies concerned. Thereafter, such

amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SECTION 9. *Separability Clause.* – If any portion or provision of this Act is declared void or unconstitutional, the remaining portions or provisions hereof shall not be affected by such declaration.

SECTION 10. *Repealing Clause.* – Any provision of law or regulation inconsistent herewith is hereby repealed, revoked, or modified accordingly.

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

Approved.