

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1632

As Passed House
March 15, 1993

Title: An act relating to funeral expenses of a deceased person.

Brief Description: Modifying funeral expenses of a deceased person.

Sponsors: Representatives Anderson, Locke, Morton, Grant, Tate, Brough, Thomas and J. Kohl.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, February 25, 1993, DP;
Passed House, March 15, 1993, 97-0.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Cooke, Ranking Minority Member; Talcott, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brown; Karahalios; Lisk; Padden; Patterson; and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Jim Erlandson (786-7093).

Background: Funeral and disposition costs are currently assessed against the surviving spouse of an adult deceased person, against the adult parents of a deceased minor child, and/or against the estate of the deceased. The state pays for funeral and disposition costs of deceased persons if there is no estate, or if there are no immediate family as noted above, or if the immediate family has resources below the General Assistance standard. Current law provides that Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) may also consider the assets of the parents or children of adult deceased persons before providing funeral assistance. The department does not have that provision at this time.

Summary of Bill: The financial responsibility for the payment of funeral and disposition costs for deceased adults would be extended to surviving parents and or children who are determined as financially able. DSHS is mandated to take into consideration the assets of the parents or children of a deceased adult in determining whether or not

it will assume the responsibility for the costs of the funeral, transportation, or disposition of the deceased person.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Department of Social and Health Services Chief of Assistance Programs, Laurie Evans, testified that the department supported the bill which would reduce the state expenditure for funeral and interment. James Knoll and Dave Daily both offered support, as representatives of the funeral industry, that it is right and proper for family members to, if financially able, bear the costs of funerals and interment.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Laurie Evans, Department of Social and Health Services; James Noel, Washington Interment Association; and David Daly, Washington State Funeral Directors Association.