

Connecticut Funeral Directors Association, Inc.
364 Silas Deane Highway
Wethersfield, CT 06109
(860) 721-0234

Written Testimony in SUPPORT
Nicole Paquette, Legislative Co-Chair
Connecticut Funeral Directors Association, Inc.

HB 6666 - An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes

Public Health Committee
Public Hearing
Monday, March 29, 2021

Good Afternoon, Senator Daugherty Abrams, Representative Steinberg, Senator Hwang, Senator Somers, Representative Petit, and the distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Nicole Paquette, I am a licensed funeral director, embalmer, and the Legislative Co-Chair of the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association (CFDA), which represents approximately 220 funeral homes throughout the state.

Thank you for hearing testimony today on HB 6666, "An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes". CFDA submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 6666: Sections 10 through 15, with a recommended amendment to Section 11** attached with this testimony.

Sections 10-15: includes properly referencing a "registered apprentice embalmer" and a "registered apprentice funeral director". Section 10 (4) defines "funeral director" and adds pronouns: "she", "herself", and "her" to the existing, "him" and "himself". If this committee wishes to include additional gender, non-binary or other, pronouns in defining "funeral director", CFDA would support such inclusion. We defer to the opinion of this committee.

Section 11 with amendment attached: includes new language that permits a student, enrolled in a mortuary science program, to fulfill the clinical embalming curriculum requirement, (which is typically ten human bodies). **CFDA recommends that embalming no more than ten human bodies, performed under the supervision of a licensed embalmer during the student's course of study, shall be reduced from the registered apprentice embalmer requirement of embalming fifty human bodies for licensure.**

Traditional funeral services with embalming have declined through the years. Students will benefit from including up to ten of their clinical embalming collegiate requirement towards the statutory requirement, while leaving such threshold of embalming fifty human bodies in place. The apprentice could then be issued an embalmer's license timelier, when the minimum one-year apprenticeship term is met. Once licensed as an embalmer, the income earned is more favorable, and the embalmer may be eligible for other benefits or privileges. The employer will

benefit from the new licensee who can then act within the full scope and with liberties that the license provides for, in the care of decedents, serving grieving families and their communities.

CFDA includes many dedicated licensed embalmers, who supervise, teach and mentor mortuary science students to complete their clinical embalming curriculum requirement. We, too, were students once who had heeded “the call” to pursue mortuary arts and science. Please allow us to help students today by understanding the changes over time to funeral services, and its impact on embalming, by supporting our attached amendment to HB6666 Section 11, respectfully submitted to you.

The Connecticut Funeral Directors Association thanks this committee for your consideration and for the important work that you each do here and elsewhere. I now make myself available to your questions or comments, or a later time at the convenience of the members of this committee.

Referred to Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH

Introduced by:
(PH)

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S
RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Sec. 10. Section 20-207 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms shall have the meanings specified:

(1) "Board" means the Connecticut Board of Examiners of Embalmers and Funeral Directors;

(2) "Person" means an individual or corporation, but not a partnership;

(3) "Funeral directing" means the business, practice or profession, as commonly practiced, of (A) directing or supervising funerals, or providing funeral services; (B) handling or encasing or providing services for handling and encasing dead human bodies, otherwise than by embalming, for burial or disposal; (C) providing embalming services; (D) providing transportation, interment and disinterment of dead human bodies; (E) maintaining an establishment so located, constructed and equipped as to permit the decent and sanitary handling of dead

human bodies, with suitable equipment in such establishment for such handling; (F) conducting an establishment from which funerals may be held; (G) engaging in consultations concerning arrangements for the disposition of human remains, including, but not limited to, arrangements for cremation or alkaline hydrolysis; (H) casketing human remains; (I) making cemetery and cremation arrangements; and (J) preparing funeral service contracts, as defined in section 42-200;

(4) "Funeral director" means any person engaged or holding himself or herself out as engaged in funeral directing whether or not he or she uses in connection with his or her name or business the words "funeral director," "undertaker" or "mortician" or any other word or title intended to designate him or her as a funeral director or mortician or as one so engaged;

(5) "Funeral service business" means the business, practice or profession of funeral directing;

(6) "Licensed embalmer" means an embalmer holding a license as provided in this chapter;

(7) "Licensed funeral director" means a funeral director holding a license as provided in this chapter;

(8) ["Student embalmer"] "Registered apprentice embalmer" means a person [studying embalming and] registered with the Department of Public Health as an apprentice pursuant to the provisions of this chapter;

(9) ["Student funeral director"] "Registered apprentice funeral director" means a person [studying the funeral service business and] registered with the Department of Public Health as an apprentice pursuant to the provisions of this chapter;

(10) "Full-time employment" means regular and steady work during the normal working hours by any person at the establishment at which he is employed; and

(11) "Manager" means an individual who (A) is licensed as an

embalmer or funeral director pursuant to this chapter and (B) has direct and personal responsibility for the daily operation and management of a funeral service business.

Sec. 11. Section 20-212 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

No person, except a licensed embalmer, shall inject any fluid or substance into any dead human body, except that a registered **[student]** apprentice embalmer may, even if not in the presence of a licensed embalmer, make such injection or perform any other act under **[his]** such licensed embalmer's instruction; and no person, firm or corporation shall enter, engage in, carry on or manage for another the business of caring for, preserving or disposing of dead human bodies until each person, firm or corporation so engaged has obtained from the Department of Public Health and holds a license as provided in this chapter; nor shall any person be employed to remove a dead human body, except a licensed embalmer, a registered **[student]** apprentice embalmer, a licensed funeral director, or a person authorized in each instance by the Chief Medical Examiner, Deputy Medical Examiner or assistant medical examiner incidental to examining the body of a deceased person, except that once a dead human body has been prepared in accordance with the **[Public Health Code]** regulations of Connecticut state agencies and the applicable provisions of the general statutes, an embalmer or funeral director licensed in this state may authorize an unlicensed employee to transport such body. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any person licensed as an embalmer or as a funeral director under the laws of another state from bringing into or removing from this state a dead human body, provided any and all other laws of this state relative to such body have been complied with. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any student who is enrolled in a program of education in mortuary science, approved by the board, with the consent of the Commissioner of Public Health, from embalming up to ten human bodies under the supervision of a licensed embalmer and incidental to such student's course of study; and embalming no more than ten human bodies, under the supervision of a licensed embalmer, shall be reduced from the

embalming requirement of Section 20-213(a) when such student has become a registered apprentice embalmer.

Sec. 12. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 20-213 of the general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

(a) (1) After a **[student]** registered apprentice embalmer has (A) completed a program of education in mortuary science approved by the board with the consent of the Commissioner of Public Health, (B) successfully completed an examination prescribed by the Department of Public Health with the consent of the board, (C) completed one year of practical training and experience of a grade and character satisfactory to the commissioner in the state in full-time employment under the personal supervision and instruction of an embalmer licensed under the provisions of this chapter, and (D) embalmed fifty human bodies in not more than two years under the supervision of a licensed embalmer or embalmers, (2) the **[student]** registered apprentice embalmer shall (A) submit to the department an application and fee of two hundred ten dollars, (B) take a written examination on the Connecticut public health laws and the regulations of Connecticut state agencies pertaining to the activities of an embalmer, and (C) take an examination in practical embalming that shall include an actual demonstration upon a cadaver. When the **[student]** registered apprentice embalmer has satisfactorily passed such examinations, said department shall issue to him or her a license to practice embalming. At the expiration of such license, if the holder thereof desires a renewal, said department shall grant it pursuant to section 20-222a, except for cause.

(b) Examinations for registration as a **[student]** registered apprentice embalmer and for an embalmer's license shall be administered to applicants by the Department of Public Health, under the supervision of the board, semiannually and at such other times as may be determined by the department.

Sec. 13. Section 20-215 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

No licensed embalmer shall sign an affidavit attesting the preparation or embalming of any body unless such body has been prepared or embalmed by **[him]** such licensed embalmer, or by a registered **[student]** apprentice embalmer under **[his]** such licensed embalmer's personal supervision.

Sec. 14. Subsection (a) of section 20-217 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

(a) When a **[student]** registered apprentice funeral director has completed a program of education approved by the board with the consent of the Commissioner of Public Health, has successfully completed an examination prescribed by the department with the consent of the board and furnishes the department with satisfactory proof that he or she has completed one year of practical training and experience in full-time employment under the personal supervision of a licensed embalmer or funeral director, and pays to the department a fee of two hundred ten dollars, **[he]** such registered apprentice funeral director shall be entitled to be examined upon the Connecticut state law and regulations pertaining to his or her professional activities. If found to be qualified by the Department of Public Health, **[he]** such registered apprentice funeral director shall be licensed as a funeral director. Renewal licenses shall be issued by the Department of Public Health pursuant to section 20-222a, unless withheld for cause as herein provided, upon a payment of a fee of two hundred thirty dollars.

Sec. 15. Section 20-224 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

(a) The provisions of sections 20-217, as amended by this act, 20-220 and 20-227 shall not prohibit the employment of assistants or of **[student]** registered apprentice embalmers and **[student]** registered apprentice funeral directors as provided in this chapter, provided a licensed funeral service business may employ no more than two **[student]** registered apprentice embalmers at any one time, and any person, firm, corporation or other organization engaged in the business of funeral directing may employ no more than one **[student]** registered

apprentice funeral director at any one time, without the approval of the Board of Examiners of Embalmers and Funeral Directors.

(b) **[Student]** Registered apprentice embalmers and **[student]** registered apprentice funeral directors shall register as apprentices with the Department of Public Health, in the manner prescribed by the commissioner in regulations adopted pursuant to section 20-211, for purposes of completing practical training and experience pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.