

HOUSE No. 490

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Carlos González

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing the COVID-19 essential worker burial assistance fund.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Carlos González</i>	<i>10th Hampden</i>	<i>1/28/2021</i>
<i>Christina A. Minicucci</i>	<i>14th Essex</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Steven Ultrino</i>	<i>33rd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/24/2021</i>
<i>Timothy R. Whelan</i>	<i>1st Barnstable</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Brian W. Murray</i>	<i>10th Worcester</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Carmine Lawrence Gentile</i>	<i>13th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i>	<i>1st Hampshire</i>	<i>2/25/2021</i>
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Diana DiZoglio</i>	<i>First Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>James J. O'Day</i>	<i>14th Worcester</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>David Allen Robertson</i>	<i>19th Middlesex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Bud L. Williams</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Marcos A. Devers</i>	<i>16th Essex</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Mathew J. Muratore</i>	<i>1st Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Gerard J. Cassidy</i>	<i>9th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/26/2021</i>
<i>Danillo A. Sena</i>	<i>37th Middlesex</i>	<i>3/15/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 490

By Mr. González of Springfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 490) of Carlos González and others for legislation to establish a special fund to be known as the COVID-19 essential worker burial assistance fund to be administered by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Covid-19 and Emergency Preparedness and Management.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act establishing the COVID-19 essential worker burial assistance fund.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. For the purposes of this act, the following words shall, unless the context
2 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

3 “Fund”, the COVID-19 Essential Worker Burial Assistance Fund established in section 2.

4 “Gateway municipalities”, as defined by section 3A of chapter 23A of the General Laws.

5 “Low-income families”, households whose income does not exceed 200 per cent of the
6 federal poverty level.

7 “Low-wage essential workforce member”, an individual who is employed in a COVID-
8 19 essential workforce earning an hourly wage of not more than \$15 per hour for their
9 employment in said essential workforces.

10 SECTION 2. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth
11 a separate fund to be known as the COVID-19 Essential Worker Burial Assistance Fund to be
12 administered by the executive office of health and human services.

13 (b) The purpose of the fund shall be to provide financial assistance in the form of grants
14 to low-income families, low-wage essential workforce members and residents of gateway
15 municipalities to defray postmortem expenses related to deaths due to COVID-19. Each grant
16 provided to an individual shall be in an amount that is not less than \$1,500; provided, that the
17 funds shall be used to mitigate or offset funeral, burial, cremation or other postmortem expenses
18 resulting from death due to COVID-19.

19 (c) There shall be credited to the fund all amounts that are, by law, transferred or
20 authorized to be transferred thereto or directed to be deposited therein, and all amounts received
21 as gifts, grants, or contributions for the purposes of the fund. Amounts credited to the fund shall
22 not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the fund at the end of a fiscal
23 year shall not revert to the General Fund.

24 (d) The executive office of health and human services shall promulgate regulations
25 necessary to carry out the purposes of this act, including, but not limited to, regulations
26 pertaining to grant application and disbursement procedures.

27 SECTION 3. On the effective date of this act, the comptroller shall transfer \$5,000,000
28 from the General Fund to the COVID-19 Essential Worker Burial Assistance Fund for the
29 purposes of carrying out this act.