

HOUSE No. 483

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Nika C. Elugardo

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 relative to establishing a COVID-19 funeral and burial assistance fund.

PETITION OF:

| NAME: | DISTRICT/ADDRESS: | DATE ADDED: |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Nika C. Elugardo</i> | <i>15th Suffolk</i> | <i>2/18/2021</i> |
| <i>Lindsay N. Sabadosa</i> | <i>1st Hampshire</i> | <i>2/24/2021</i> |

HOUSE No. 483

By Ms. Elugardo of Boston, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 483) of Nika C. Elugardo and Lindsay N. Sabadosa relative to establishing a COVID-19 funeral and burial assistance fund. Covid-19 and Emergency Preparedness and Management.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to establishing a COVID-19 funeral and 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. (a) There shall be established a Fund to be known as the COVID-19 Funeral
2 and Burial Assistance Fund to be administered by the executive office of health and human
3 services.

4 (b) The purpose of the Fund shall be to provide financial assistance in the form of grants
5 to low-income families to defray postmortem expenses related to deaths due to COVID-19. For
6 the purposes of this act, the term “low-income families” shall mean households whose income
7 does not exceed 200 per cent of the federal poverty level. Each grant provided to an individual
8 shall be in an amount not exceeding \$8,000; provided that the funds shall be used to mitigate or
9 offset funeral, burial, cremation or other postmortem expenses resulting from death due to
10 COVID-19.

11 (c) There shall be credited to the Fund all amounts that are, by law, transferred or
12 authorized to be transferred thereto or directed to be deposited therein, and all amounts received

13 as gifts, grants, or contributions for the purposes of the Fund. Amounts credited to the Fund shall
14 not be subject to further appropriation and any money remaining in the Fund at the end of a fiscal
15 year shall not revert to the General Fund.

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

19 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage and shall apply to postmortem
20 expense claims that occur or have occurred during the effective period of the COVID-19
21 emergency, as declared on March 10, 2020 and until 180 days after the COVID 19 emergency
22 declaration has been lifted.

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24 SECTION 3. On the effective date of this act, the comptroller shall transfer \$5,000,000
25 from the General Fund to the COVID-19 Essential Funeral and Burial Assistance Fund for the
26 purposes of carrying out this act.