



KANSAS FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

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Testimony Concerning Senate Bill 172

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 15, 2023

Chairman Billinger and members of the Committee, I am Pam Scott, Executive Director of the Kansas Funeral Directors Association (KFDA). The KFDA would like to thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today on Senate Bill 172. The KFDA represents Kansas funeral establishments, funeral directors and embalmers.

The KFDA supports the amending K.S.A. 74-4989 to increase the lump-sum death benefit paid upon the death of a retirant of the Kansas public employees retirement system from \$4000 to \$6,000. The dollar amount of the death benefit has not been changed for almost 30 years. The last increase was in 1993 when the benefit was increased from \$2500 to the current \$4000.

The KFDA hopes you will agree that the following information concerning the average cost of a funeral demonstrates the need to increase the lump-sum death benefit. According to the National Funeral Directors Association 2021 General Price List Study, the national medium cost of an adult funeral with viewing and burial for calendar year 2021 was \$7848. If a vault is included the price increases to \$9420. This includes the following items: basic services fee, removal/transfer of remains to funeral home, embalming and other preparation of the body (casketing, cosmetology, dressing and grooming), a metal casket, use of facilities and staff for viewing and funeral ceremony, use of a hearse, use of a service car/van, and a basic memorial printed package (e.g., memorial cards, register book, etc.). The cost does not take into account cemetery, monument or marker costs or miscellaneous cash-advance charges, such as for flowers or an obituary.

The national medium cost of an adult funeral with viewing and cremation was \$6970 in 2021. This includes the basic services fee, removal/transfer of remains to funeral home, embalming and other preparation of the body, use of facilities and staff for viewing and a funeral ceremony, use of a service car/van, basic memorial printed package, cremation fee, cremation casket, and urn. The median cost does not include the price of interment in a cemetery, monument/marker costs or other miscellaneous cash advance charges

The lump-sum death benefit can be assigned to the funeral home prior to death to assure the benefits will be paid to the funeral home to cover the costs of a funeral. The increase in the death benefit from \$4000 to \$6000 would help families cover funeral and burial costs so families can provide a meaningful funeral for their loved one.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. The KFDA asks for your support of Senate Bill 172.