

The Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers convened virtually via WebEx for a Regulatory Advisory Panel meeting on Tuesday, September 1, 2020, with staff coordination on-site at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mia Mimms, FSL, JD, Board President, Panel Chair (On-Site)
R. Thomas Slusser, Jr., FSL, Board Vice-President (Virtual)
Kenneth Scott Hickey, M.D., Board Secretary Treasurer, Citizen Member (Virtual)
Joseph Frank Walton, FSL, Board Member/Educator (Virtual)
Paul Harris, Regulatory Support Services, Inc. (Virtual)
Barry Robinson, FSL, Virginia Mortician's Association (Virtual)*
Laurence Spiaggi, FSL, Virginia Funeral Directors' Association (Virtual)*
John Paul Welch, FSL, Representative, Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia (Virtual)

DHP STAFF PRESENT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING:

Erin Barrett, Assistant Attorney General, Board Counsel (Virtual)
David Brown, DC, DHP Director (Virtual)
Sarah Georgen, Licensing and Operations Manager (On-Site)
Kelley Palmatier, Deputy Executive Director (Virtual)
Corie Tillman Wolf, Executive Director (On-Site)
Heather Wright, Board Program Manager (On-Site)
Elaine Yeatts, Senior Policy Analyst (Virtual)

OTHER GUESTS PRESENT (VIRTUAL)

Raf Uddin Ahmed, Muslim Association of Virginia
Suja Amir
Angela Bezik, Virginia Funeral Directors' Association
Chuck Duvall
Sarah Gill, The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards
Muhammad Hanif, Citizen Member
Scott Johnson
Bo Keeney, Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia
Bruce Keeney, Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia
Hon. Jeremy McPike, Senate of Virginia
Blair Nelsen, FSL, Board Member
Dianne Rencsok, Funeral Consumers Alliance of the Virginia Blue Ridge
Samuel Rhue, Sr., FSL
Amir Saeed
Sidra (Last Name Unknown)

Lauren Thomas, The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards
Ben Traynham
Lacy Whitaker, Virginia Funeral Directors' Association
Joseph Michael Williams, FSL, Board Member*
Unknown Call-in User 7 (804-240-****)
Unknown Call-in User 8 (804-274-****)

**participant indicates attendance to count toward continuing education requirements*

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Mimms called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Due to the COVID-19 declared state of emergency and consistent with Amendment 28 to HB29 (Budget Bill for 2018-2020) and the applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act including Virginia Code § 2.2-3708.2, the Board convened a virtual meeting to consider such regulatory and business matters as was presented on the agenda necessary for the board to discharge its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities.

Ms. Mimms provided the Board members, staff, and the public with contact information should the electronic meeting be interrupted.

Ms. Mimms provided reminders to the Board and public regarding WebEx functions. She completed a roll call of the panel members and staff.

Ms. Mimms read the mission of the Board, which is also the mission of the Department of Health Professions.

ORDERING OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Mimms requested proposed changes to the ordering of the agenda. Hearing none, she proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Mimms requested if any panel members had any amendments or proposed changes to the draft August 14, 2020 Regulatory Advisory Panel meeting minutes for consideration by the full Board. Hearing none, she proceeded with the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Mimms stated that written public comment had been received from the following individuals:

1. Bruce B. Keeney, Sr., Legislative Counsel, Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia
2. Raziuddin Ali
3. Amal Damaj
4. Halimah Abdul-Mateen

5. Nebeela Perwez
6. Sidra Butt, DDS
7. Agha Haider
8. Sara Jamal
9. Suja S. Amir
10. Nancy Wein
11. Iram Amir
12. Anita Elock
13. Senator Jeremy McPike

Ms. Tillman Wolf stated that one additional written public comment from Rabbi Yossell Kranz was received after the deadline and read the comment submitted.

Ms. Mimms stated that the written public comments received by the deadline had been distributed to the panel members prior to the meeting and would be included in the meeting minutes (Attachment A).

Ms. Mimms stated that the panel had received one request for oral public comment from Samuel Rhue, John Tyler Community College.

Mr. Rhue provided comment to the panel. (Attachment B)

CHARGE OF THE RAP

Ms. Mimms stated that the Regulatory Advisory Panel (RAP) was convened pursuant to 18VAC65-11-70 of the Board's Regulations related to Public Participation. Ms. Mimms stated that this RAP was convened for the purposes set forth in regulation - to convene stakeholders and other individuals interested in this issue to provide input and technical assistance to the Board regarding the Board's adoption of regulations for the licensure of funeral directors and embalmers as separate license types.

Ms. Mimms stated that the intent of the meeting was to build on discussion from the first meeting, with the goal of finalizing a set of recommendations and draft regulatory language for the full Board's consideration.

Ms. Mimms asked the panel members to continue to consider the following questions during the meeting:

- What requirements for education for a funeral director or for an embalmer will ensure safety and competence to practice in these respective areas?
- What requirements for examination for a funeral director or for an embalmer will demonstrate entry-level safety and competence to practice in these respective areas?
- What should a required internship experience look like for a funeral director? For an embalmer?

Ms. Mimms stated that in addition to the examples for education, examination, and experience, there may be other regulatory areas that require discussion and recommendation, such as possible concerns about scope of practice within the context of unprofessional conduct for purposes of Board disciplinary action, and if there were any clarifying edits needed in the current regulations to address all three license types.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Review of August 14, 2020 RAP Meeting – Possible Recommendations and Draft Regulatory Language – Corie Tillman Wolf, JD, Executive Director

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided a summary of the first RAP meeting with a recap of the first set of possible recommendations formulated by the panel, as well as an overview of what proposed language has been inserted into the draft of regulations for consideration by the panel.

Panel Discussion of Recommendations to the Full Board Meeting – Mia Mimms, Panel Chair

Funeral Director – Education, Examination, Experience

The panel discussed the draft regulation language and possible education requirements for a funeral director license by examination. The panel discussed the requirement for an associates' degree or its equivalent, whether from a program of mortuary science of funeral service accredited by the ABFSE or from a funeral director program approved by the Board. The panel discussed a proposed requirement for successful completion of coursework in anatomy and pathology in lieu of any science-based examination. An applicant would not be required to complete embalming coursework or labs to be eligible for licensure.

Panel members discussed possible examination requirements for funeral director applicants and the distinction between the National Board Exam (NBE) and State Board Exam (SBE). Panel members discussed a recommendation for the passage of the Arts section of either exam, as well as the successful passage of the state laws, rules and regulations (LRR) examination.

The panel discussed the recommended experience requirements including the completion of a 2,000-hour internship in no less than 12 months, with 25 funerals and 25 arrangement conferences.

BREAK

The Panel took a break at 11:01 a.m. The Panel reconvened at 11:13 a.m.

Embalmer – Education, Examination, Experience

The panel discussed the draft regulation language and educational requirements for an embalmer including an associate's degree from a program of mortuary science or funeral service accredited by the ABFSE or Board-approved program.

The panel discussed the examination requirements for an embalmer including the passage of a National Board Exam – Sciences (ABFSE accredited grad) or State Board Exam – Sciences (non-ABFSE accredited grad) and the passage of state laws, rules, and regulations (LRR) examination.

The panel discussed the experience requirements for an embalmer including 2,000 hours of internship complete in no less than 12 months and assisting with a minimum of 25 embalmings.

Discipline

The panel discussed draft language in the discipline provisions of the draft regulations, which includes reference to the funeral directing and embalming, as well as a provision related to scope of practice.

Ms. Tillman Wolf provided a summary of the recommendations and regulatory language discussed by the panel (Attachment C).

Upon a *MOTION* by Mr. Spiaggi and properly seconded by Mr. Robinson, the panel approved the draft regulation language as discussed and amended which will be forwarded to the full Board for consideration. The motion passed unanimously.

WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS – Mia Mimms, Panel Chair

Ms. Mimms announced the next steps, including compiling a final set of recommendations and draft regulations for consideration by the full Board at its business meeting on October 6, 2020.

Ms. Mimms stated that in order to meet the timeframe established by Senate Bill 1044 to have emergency regulations in place by January 14, 2021, the Board will look to adopt emergency regulations and a NOIRA.

Ms. Mimms stated that the regulatory process will involve additional comment periods and stated that interested parties should refer to the Town Hall website for up-to-date information on the status of regulations, as well as access to public comment forums.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT:


Ms. Mimms provided the steps necessary for participants to be awarded continuing education for attendance of the meeting pursuant to 18 VAC 65-20-151. She announced that continuing education would be awarded to those participants who provided the required information to the Board’s e-mail box by September 8, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

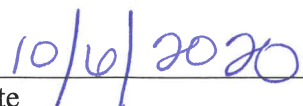
With all business concluded, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.



Mia Mimms, FSL, JD, Panel Chair



Corie Tillman Wolf, J.D., Executive Director



Date

10-07-2020

Date

----- Forwarded message -----

From: IFHV <ifhvoffice@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Aug 30, 2020 at 5:07 PM

Subject: Comments for consideration by Regulatory Advisory Panel and Board of Funeral Directors & Embalmers related to implementation of SB 1044

To: Tillman Wolf, Corie (DHP) <Corie.Wolf@dhp.virginia.gov>

Cc: <elaine.yeatts@dhp.virginia.gov>, Paul Welch <paulwelch2@va.metrocast.net>, Bruce Keeney <KeeneyGroup@gmail.com>

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia (IFHV) and specifically the numerous members who participated in developing recommendations on the regulatory process related to SB 1044 of the Virginia General Assembly. Specifically, we would like to comment on a suggestion and a “licensed funeral director” (those licensed after January 1, 2020) NOT be permitted to serve as a “Manager of Record.” Your distributing these to the RAP members would be appreciated.

The Code of Virginia (54.1-2800 Definitions) states: (emphasis added)

1. "Funeral director" means any person *engaged in the practice of funeral directing*.
2. "*Funeral directing*" means the for-profit profession of directing or supervising funerals, preparing human dead for burial *by means other than embalming*, or making arrangements for funeral services or the financing of funeral services.
3. While the Code of Virginia does not appear to define a “*Manager of Record*” that term is defined in the Board’s regulations as “a funeral service licensee or funeral director who provides “direct supervision and management of a funeral service establishment or branch facility.”

We note that at present, the few licensed funeral directors have been trained in performing embalming. These few licensed funeral directors have the training and experience to serve as a Manager of Record since they have the training and knowledge to provide the proper supervision and management of funeral homes and branch establishments. It is the Manager of Record who oversees that delivery of all services is proper and in compliance with laws to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. How can a “Funeral Director”, with limited (and no hands on) knowledge of embalming, be expected to properly *supervise and manage that aspect of the funeral home’s services*.

We have two suggestions to address this concern, noting #1 is preferred as it is less confusing. Both #1 and #2 will help clarify that a Funeral Director has limited and no hands on knowledge of embalming. Both will address the concerns of those of the Moslem faith.

1. In the new regulations, state that **a licensed funeral director, licensed after (a specific date when the regulations go into effect) may not serve as a Manager of Record**. This would grandfather the few current Funeral Directors and allow them to continue as a Manager of Record due to their full level of training and experience.

OR

2. In the new regulations, state that **a licensed funeral director licensed after (a specific date when the regulations go into effect) may serve as a Manager of Record ONLY at funeral establishments or branch facilities where embalming services are NOT provided.** This approach would clearly allow those of the Moslem faith to serve as a Manager or Record since their faith prohibits providing embalming services. Likewise, due to insufficient level of training on embalming, a licensed funeral director would NOT be allowed to be the Manager of Record at funeral establishments or branch facilities were available.

Especially with concerns related to infectious disease and hazardous waste, it is most important that those who “direct and supervise” funeral homes (the Manager of Record) be thoroughly trained and experienced in embalming services. This is particularly true in that the level of education to be required of a Funeral Director as related to embalming has yet to be determined. Nor is there a history as to whether those requirements will be insufficient or not.

Your consideration of these recommendations will be appreciated.

Bruce B. Keeney, Sr.

Executive Director & Legislative Counsel
Association of Independent Funeral Homes of Virginia
4461 Cox Road
Suite 110
Glen Allen, VA 23060
(804) 643-0312 phone
(804) 643-0311 fax
ifhvoffice@gmail.com
www.ifhv.org

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 10:54 AM <raziiali***@gmail.com> wrote:

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Raziuddin Ali
Midlothian
23113

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:11 AM ammoulette1 <ammou*****@gmail.com>
wrote:

Greetings, Director Wolf and Senator McPike.

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community as to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Amal Damaj
North Chesterfield, VA 23236

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:12 AM Halimah Abdul-Mateen <ummi****@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Official,

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions. The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

2) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Halimah Abdul-Mateen
Richmond, VA

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:16 AM Nabeela Perwez <nabe****@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Respected Leaders,

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety, and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally, I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.



Nabeela Perwez

Glen Allen 23059

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:22 AM Sidra Butt <si****@gmail.com> wrote:

It has come to my attention that under the guise of regulations, safety, and other reasons, the IFHV is requiring competency in embalming. This comes across as islamophobic and antisemitic since anyone who is in the business of funeral services should be well versed and educated in what different faiths require and do not require and what is scientifically safe or not. It is a well known fact that embalming has never been a part of a regular funeral but truly just a money making scheme since the only thing that is needed is refrigeration of the body. Without embalming the body goes through the natural process of decomposition unlike being mummified or just for cosmetic reasons.

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you,
Sidra Butt DDS.

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:29 AM Agha W. Haider <[waha*****@yahoo.com](mailto:wah*****@yahoo.com)> wrote:

As a member of the community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Agha W. Haider

Midlothian, Va 23113

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On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 12:00 PM Sara Jamal <sj***@hotmail.com> wrote:

I would like to emphasize on the importance of having a licensed individual familiar with the funeral rites for the Muslim community. I'm happy to see the initiative with this regard. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sara Jamal
Glen Allen, Va

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 11:31 AM Suja S. Amir <suja*****@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Wolf,

SB1044 sought to address the concern that current prerequisites for applicants as a funeral service licensee required demonstrating competency in embalming. Embalming is against Islamic burial rites. The current licensing structure is prohibitive and inequitable to the Muslim community by depriving their community of having a member of their faith, fulfill their rites and traditions. I attended the last meeting.

However, the recommendation by the IFHV is of deep concern and seems to disregard the concerns of the Muslim community and make SB1044 null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions. I am not sure where that was referenced in the presentation made by Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA).

2) According to the IFHV recommendations, the funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by Imam Ammar, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was because of opposition to standards of care, safety and competence.

4) Manager of Record (MOR) - the recommendation requiring that the MOR be licensed to provide "any and all services", discriminates against the Muslim community. If this recommendation is accepted, by default, a Muslim will not be able to become the MOR without embalming obtaining training. And therefore, the implication is that only someone who is NOT Muslim will only be allowed to be a MOR. Additionally, implicating that the Muslim community needs oversight by a non-Muslim in order to ensure standards.

5) The Regulatory Advisory Committee -- there seems to be a conflict of interest of the members of the RAP given that the many of the members of the RAP have affiliations with IFHV.

This voids the independent intent of the committee as undue influence can create barriers and may not be able to contribute to balancing the interests of the varied stakeholders equitably.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's legislation. Grieving families, from all beliefs should be able to have access, availability to funeral services in accordance with their rites. Additionally, a competitive workforce is very important, and I support a competition in this area.

Thank you for your time.

Suja S. Amir, MPA

" You learn a lot about someone when you share a meal together." Anthony Bourdain

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 12:46 PM Nancy Wein <wein*****@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Wolf:

I am writing in support of Senator Jeremy McPike's bill, SB1044.

I am concerned that the comments given by the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPike's bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Nancy Wein

North Chesterfield, VA 23236

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 1:32 PM Iram Amir <iram*****@gmail.com> wrote:

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) are discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community, and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPike's bill SB104, null and void.

1) It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage, and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2) The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3) There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety, and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance with their religious requirements, additionally, I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Signed
Iram Amir
Glen Allen 23060

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 1:36 PM Anita <anitaelcock@almdinarichmond.org> wrote:

Good afternoon,

As a member of the Muslim community, I am concerned that the comments given by the the Association of Independent Funeral Homes (IFHV) is discriminatory, prohibitive against the Muslim community and seeks to make the intention of Senator McPikes bill SB104, null and void.

1)It seems that IFHV believes that the objection the Muslim community has to the current structure is due to "fees or payments received for transportation, storage and burial of remains", disregarding the reasoning stemmed from Islamic faith traditions.

2)The funeral director is prohibited from handling the body. Islamic rites, as described by the Imam Ammar Ammonette of the Islamic Center of Virginia (ICVA) at last month's board meeting, clearly indicated that there is a ritual washing of the body. It also involves covering the body with traditional shrouds after the washing.

3)There is an implication that the request by the Muslim community is also a way to bypass safe and competent care. This is highly disturbing as it is fueling disrespectful and seemingly discriminatory assumptions about the Islamic faith. Imam Ammar made no indication of the Islamic traditions or that the need to create a separate licensing was due to being against standards of care, safety and competence.

I support the full intent of Senator McPike's bill which sought to help provide a way for residents of Virginia from the Muslim community the ability to provide funeral services in accordance to their religious requirements, additionally I support any system that allows for choice, competition in the marketplace. Senator McPike's focus on assisting grieving families in SB1044 is appreciated and has impressed his constituents and those outside his district.

Thank you for your time.

Signed,

Anita Elcock

Henrico, Virginia 23227

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **senate district29** <district29@senate.virginia.gov>

Date: Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 9:53 AM

Subject: Concerns regarding draft - SB1044 - Funeral Directors

To: David Brown <david.brown@dhp.virginia.gov>

Cc: Atif Qarni <atif.qarni@governor.virginia.gov>, Megan Healy <megan.healy@governor.virginia.gov>, Tillman Corie <corie.wolf@dhp.virginia.gov>

Dear Dr. Brown:

I have taken the opportunity to read through the draft regulations related to my SB1044 that I believe will be discussed at your RAP meeting on September 2nd. As always I appreciate the good work you all are doing and all the effort it takes to gain consensus. However, I am very concerned about the educational requirements as they are proposed in the draft as I believe if adopted, they would effectively make moot any other changes to the licensure process and gut the intent of the my legislation. The creation of an overly burdensome, non- relevant curriculum(ie, the American Board of Funeral Service Education curriculum requires embalming courses) that can possibly take years to be approved or implemented is exactly the outcome I wanted to avoid as it will be a large barrier that keeps quality Virginians out of the industry – an industry that I think we all agree is in need of some modest innovation to ensure a sustainable and vibrant workforce for the future. Let me be clear – reasonable and relevant educational requirements are vital as all families need to believe they are dealing with a competent and caring professional. However, if those requirements are unnecessary and keep good people from entering the profession, it is tantamount to restriction of trade if intended or not.

I look forward to reviewing the regulations once they are posted after the RAP meeting and having the opportunity to discuss them further with you at that time. Please let me know if I can be helpful in the meantime.

Jeremy McPike
State Senator
29th District

On Mon, Aug 31, 2020 at 5:48 PM Yossel Kranz <ykranz@chabadofva.org> wrote:

Hi Corie,

I am writing to you regarding SB1044 on behalf of Jewish communities throughout the Commonwealth. It seems that the proposal as written conflicts with Jewish tradition, and would thereby discriminate against people of the Jewish faith?

Please advise.

Sincerely,



Rabbi Yossel Kranz

Chabad of Virginia

804.740.2000 ext. 3 |

chabadofva.org

[Donate](#) to The  of Jewish Richmond

Attachment B

John Tyler Community College

Per Senate Bill 1044 implementation date, John Tyler Community College estimates at a minimum program effective date of Fall 2021. The college will continue to work on moving the curriculum forward in a timely manner.

Samuel Rhue

Interim Program Director

**Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers
Regulatory Advisory Panel – Licensure of Funeral Directors and Embalmers (SB 1044)**

License Type	Area	Recommendations	Notes
Funeral Director	Education	Associates degree from a program of mortuary science or funeral service accredited by the ABFSE OR have completed an associate degree or the equivalent of 60 credit hours of post-secondary coursework, including successful completion of coursework in the areas of pathology and anatomy, from a funeral directing program approved by the Board	
	Examination	1. Passage of National Board Exam - Arts (ABFSE accredited grad) or State Board Exam – Arts (non-ABFSE accredited grad) 2. Passage of state laws, rules, and regulations (LRR) examination	Board review of state LRR to ensure global application of questions
	Experience	1. 2,000 hours of internship completed in no less than 12 months 2. Assist with 25 funerals and 25 arrangement conferences	
Embalmer	Education	Associates degree from a program of mortuary science or funeral service accredited by the ABFSE or Board-approved program	
	Examination	1. Passage of National Board Exam – Sciences (ABFSE accredited grad) or State Board Exam – Sciences (non-ABFSE accredited grad) 2. Passage of state laws, rules, and regulations (LRR) examination	Board review of state LRR to ensure global application of questions
	Experience	1. 2,000 hours of internship completed in no less than 12 months 2. Assist with 25 embalmings	