

To Whom it May Concern:

Pass the Illinois Funeral and Burial Assistance Program for Murdered Children Act!

The State of Illinois rightly classifies gun violence as a public health crisis. It devastates communities across the state, both through the immediate loss of life and the long-term, harmful effects of trauma experienced by victims, witnesses, and community residents. The trauma often extends beyond the grief the victim's family experiences, causing severe financial repercussions, as survivors take on thousands of dollars of debt to pay for the funeral and burial of their loved ones.

The State already reimburses families up to \$10,000 for the cost of burying murdered loved ones. That program is a good thing, but for families under 150% of the poverty level, raising \$10,000 to bury their murdered child and then waiting months or sometimes years for reimbursement adds to the pain of burying their child.

The Illinois Funeral and Burial Assistance Program for Murdered Children Act would allow the State of Illinois to directly pay funeral and burial service providers up to \$10,000 for respectable burials of children who are murdered by gun violence if their family's income is under 150% of the federal poverty level. These direct payments, managed by the State of Illinois, would alleviate some of the pain associated with asking for money and financial hardship. Applicants would no longer have to take on a tremendous amount of debt to bury their loved ones. They would no longer have to fill out a stack of confusing paperwork while in the middle of debilitating grief, and they would no longer have to wait months or years for reimbursement.

Nobody plans to bury their murdered child – it's among the worst possible unexpected expenses, yet thousands of Illinois families are paying it. They are depending on your help during some of the most tragic and painful times of their lives. We look forward to working with the Illinois General Assembly to ease some of their pain.



David Nayak, MD
Founder & President
Strength to Love Foundation



Address
2136 West Belmont Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60618

Web
www.strengthtolove.org

Email
david.nayak@strengthtolove.org

Phone
(312) 625-2010

“

Love is the most durable power in the world.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.