

# Here's how you can support H.742!

## 1) Call your State Representative and State Senator on September 11 and 12.

*"Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a constituent. I'm calling to ask you to support H.742 'An Act Amending Victim Compensation Statute' so that the circumstances of a loved one's homicide cannot be used to determine eligibility for funeral and burial reimbursement. It's a priority to me that survivors of homicide victims are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, especially in their time of greatest need. Please let your colleagues on the Judiciary Committee know that H.742 is important to your constituents. Thank you."*

You can find your legislators here: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

## 2) Join us at the Judiciary Committee hearing on September 12 at 1pm at the State House.

We hope survivors and allies will be out in full force at the State House on September 12! We invite you to come and testify in support of H.742 and drop off information about H.742 to your own legislators while you're in the building. Spoken testimony must be under 3 minutes in length. Please bring written copies of your testimony to submit. Hearings can be long. We will be staying until we're heard! If you can't be at the hearing, you can still submit written testimony by September 13.

If you would like to testify, please email [mallory@ldbpeaceinstitute.org](mailto:mallory@ldbpeaceinstitute.org).



## **SUPPORT H.742**

### **“AN ACT AMENDING VICTIM COMPENSATION STATUTE”**

Families deal with physical, emotional, and financial stress in the aftermath of their loved one's murder. Paying for funeral and burial services is a major burden, and some families of murder victims need financial assistance to lay their loved one to rest. Families can choose to apply for Victim Compensation in hopes they will be reimbursed for their loved one's final expenses.

Too many families are re-traumatized when they are eventually denied by Victim Compensation because of a clause in the state statute that requires a family's claim be reduced or denied in the event their loved one "contributed to" their own death. When families are denied Victim Compensation, they're punished for their loved one's murder.

**We believe it is a human right to lay your loved one to rest with respect and dignity, regardless of the circumstances surrounding their death.**

Victim Compensation funding comes primarily from restitution, revoked bail, and other fees and fines paid by people convicted of crimes. Victim Compensation is a reimbursement fund of last resort. That means families, funeral homes, or cemeteries must present receipts and only receive payment for the cost of services when they are approved. A proper funeral and burial is essential for families and communities to move forward in their healing process after a traumatic loss.

**The Peace Institute drafted legislation to amend victim compensation so that no families of homicide victims can be denied reimbursement for modest funeral and burial costs because of the circumstances surrounding their loved one's murder.**

Representative Evandro Carvalho filed the bill, and Mayor Marty Walsh adopted H.742 as one of his legislative priorities.

### **Here is the current text of the statute:**

*(e) An offender or an accomplice of an offender shall not be eligible to receive compensation with respect to a crime committed by an offender. To the extent that the victim's acts or conduct provoked or contributed to the injuries, the division shall reduce or deny an award to the claimant or claimants in accordance with regulations enacted pursuant to section four.*

### **Here's what H.742 would do:**

- Change “shall” to “may” in section e so the Attorney General's office has the option to reimburse families of murder victims for modest funeral and burial costs regardless of the circumstances surrounding their death.
- Add to section e: “In the event of a victim's death by homicide, said award may be reduced except the costs for appropriate and modest funeral, burial, and/or cremation services shall be paid by the fund.”

**We have the opportunity to help families get the resources they need to start their healing journey.**

