

Protect Family-Owned Funeral Homes. Protect Community Stability. *Death Tax Repeal Act of 2025 (S.587 / H.R.1301)*

The Issue: Funeral Homes Are Family Businesses

Most funeral homes in America are small, family-owned businesses, often serving the same community for generations.

They are not large corporations.

They are neighbors. They are employers. They are taxpayers. They are essential service providers during life's most difficult moments.

When a funeral home owner dies, the estate tax can threaten the ability of the next generation to continue serving their community.

Why This Matters

Funeral homes are unique small businesses:

- They operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- They must maintain specialized facilities, vehicles, supplies and equipment.
- They own real estate that has often been in the family for decades.
- They cannot simply downsize, relocate or liquidate inventory.
- They serve families regardless of ability to pay.

On paper, these assets may appear valuable. In reality, they are essential operating tools, not liquid wealth.

When estate tax liability is triggered at death, heirs may be forced to:

- Sell the business
- Sell land or facilities
- Take on significant debt
- Or transfer ownership outside the family

That disrupts generational small businesses and weakens community stability.

The Community Impact

Family-owned funeral homes:

- Employ local residents
- Support local vendors, such as florists, caterers, printers, clergy and musicians, among others.
- Pay local property and business taxes
- Sponsor youth programs, civic groups and charities
- Serve as critical infrastructure during public health emergencies and disasters

In many rural communities, the funeral home is often one of the longest-standing and most stable local businesses.

When estate tax burdens force sales to large regional or national corporations: local ownership disappears, community relationships change, decision-making leaves the community and small-town economic diversity declines.

This Is About Generational Continuity

Funeral service is often passed down through generations. Children grow up in the business. They serve apprenticeships. They commit their careers to continuing a family legacy of care.

The *Death Tax Repeal Act* would eliminate estate tax liability that can jeopardize the ability of families to continue operating small businesses like funeral homes. This provides certainty and stability for succession planning.

What We Support

The *Death Tax Repeal Act* would:

- Repeal the federal estate tax
- Repeal the generation-skipping transfer tax
- Remove the financial pressure that can force liquidation of family-owned small businesses

Stable and predictable tax policy allows funeral homes to:

- Invest in facilities and equipment
- Hire and retain employees
- Plan for generational transfer
- Continue serving grieving families without disruption

This Is About More Than a Tax

This is about:

- Protecting small businesses
- Preserving local jobs
- Supporting rural and suburban communities
- Maintaining locally-owned essential service providers

When a funeral home owner dies, the community should not lose its funeral home.

The Ask

We respectfully urge you to:

- ✓ Support S.587 / H.R.1301
- ✓ Cosponsor the *Death Tax Repeal Act*
- ✓ Protect family-owned small businesses in your district

Funeral homes care for families during their most vulnerable moments. They should not be penalized when passing their business to the next generation.

Protect family businesses. Protect local jobs. Protect community stability.

Sponsors

Sen. John Thune (R-SD); Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA)

Committee Jurisdiction

Senate Finance Committee; House Committee on Ways and Means

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