

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1100

As Passed House:
February 9, 2023

Title: An act relating to the disposition of the remains of a county resident who dies indigent in an adjacent county outside of Washington.

Brief Description: Concerning the disposition of the remains of a county resident who dies indigent in an adjacent county outside of Washington.

Sponsors: Representatives Schmick and Leavitt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 1/18/23, 1/20/23 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/9/23, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Permits a board of county commissioners to provide for the disposition of the remains of an indigent resident of the county who dies in an adjacent county outside of Washington.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Duerr, Chair; Alvarado, Vice Chair; Goehner, Ranking Minority Member; Jacobsen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Griffey and Riccelli.

Staff: Kellen Wright (786-7134).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Human remains in Washington must be decently buried or undergo cremation, alkaline hydrolysis, or natural organic reduction within a reasonable time after death.

Generally, a person has the authority to direct the disposition of their own remains. If a person has not made arrangements or provided directions, or if the cost of executing the person's wishes exceeds a reasonable amount, then responsibility for arranging the disposition, and the liability for the costs of the disposition, falls to the person's family or guardian.

However, when a person dies indigent and their body is not claimed by relatives or a church organization, it is the responsibility of the board of county commissioners of the county in which they died to provide for the disposition of the person's remains.

Summary of Bill:

A board of county commissioners may provide for the disposition of the remains of an indigent resident of the county who dies in a neighboring county that is not in Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill was requested by the Asotin County (County) Commissioners. Clarkston and Lewiston are only separated by the Snake River, but the County is prohibited from assisting with burial costs if a resident passes away across the river. This can result in those in Idaho having to pay for the burial. Counties have funds to pay for these expenses, and this allows counties to defray costs if they choose to do so.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Joe Schmick, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.