

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1907

C 208 L 17
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning abandoned cemeteries.

Sponsors: Representatives Orcutt, Blake, DeBolt, McDonald and Van Werven.

House Committee on State Government, Elections & Information Technology
Senate Committee on State Government

Background:

Private cemeteries generally operate under certificates of authority granted by the Funeral and Cemetery Board (Board). Cemeteries must deposit 10 percent of the gross proceeds of the sale of each grave, niche, or crypt into an endowment care fund, and the income from an endowment care fund must be used for the general care, maintenance, and embellishment of the cemetery. Other requirements address permitted and prohibited investments of endowment care funds, annual reports to the Board regarding funds, and other matters. The Board may revoke or suspend a certificate of authority for violation of any of the requirements.

An abandoned cemetery is a burial ground of human dead for which the county assessor has no record of ownership; the last known owner is deceased and the title has not been conveyed; or the organization that formed for the purposes of burying the dead has disbanded, been dissolved, or otherwise ceased to exist, and title has not been conveyed.

The responsibilities of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) include promotion of historic preservation efforts throughout the state, enhancement of the effectiveness of the state preservation program, and maintenance of a database of all known cemeteries and burial sites in the state.

The State Archivist manages all public records of the State of Washington.

Summary:

Landowners of abandoned cemeteries must allow for burials under rules adopted by the Board. In adopting rules, the Board must consult with the DAHP. Records, maps, and other documents associated with an abandoned cemetery must be transferred to the State Archives,

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and endowment care funds held by a cemetery authority at the time of abandonment must be transferred to the DAHP.

An "abandoned cemetery" includes burial grounds of the human dead in which the organization that held a certificate of authority no longer has a valid certificate.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	48	0

Effective: July 23, 2017