

HCS HB 111 -- UNCLAIMED VETERANS' REMAINS

SPONSOR: Day

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Veterans.

This substitute allows the unclaimed remains of a veteran to be collected by a veterans' service organization for the purpose of interment in a veterans' cemetery if the remains have been in possession of a funeral establishment for at least one year and the funeral establishment has given written notice to another funeral establishment or a person who contracted for the cremation or interment. If the address of the person entitled to the remains cannot be reasonably ascertained, notice must be given in a newspaper of general circulation in the county of the veteran's residence. If the veteran's residence is unknown, notice must be given in the county where the veteran died or, if the death location is unknown, in the county in which the funeral establishment is located. If the remains are not claimed within 30 days of the written notice or within four months of the date of the first newspaper publication, the remains may be given to a veterans' service organization for interment.

A veterans' service organization is not liable for simple negligence if it does not scatter the remains but must take all reasonable steps to inter the remains in a veterans' cemetery.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that there are a number of unclaimed veterans' remains in funeral homes throughout the state. These homes are reluctant to release these remains to the veterans' service organizations due to liability issues. The bill will provide a decent burial that the veteran deserves.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Day; Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association; Dewey Riehn, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Missouri Department; and Tim Norton, Missouri Veterans' Commission

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.