

HCS SCS SB 186 -- UNCLAIMED CREMATED REMAINS OF VETERANS

SPONSOR: Brown (Davis)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Veterans by a vote of 12 to 0.

This substitute changes the laws regarding the disposal of unclaimed veterans' remains. In its main provisions, the substitute:

(1) Allows a funeral director to enter required personal data into the electronic death registration system and provides the local registrar with a cause of death certification;

(2) Defines "veteran" as a person honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States including, but not limited to, the Philippine Commonwealth Army, the Regular Scouts, and the Special Philippine Scouts;

(3) Revises the definition of "veterans' service organization" as an organization that is federally chartered by the United States Congress, a veterans' service organization recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or that qualifies as a Section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) nonprofit tax organization under the Internal Revenue Code and is organized for the verification and burial of veterans and dependants;

(4) Requires a funeral establishment or coroner in possession of cremated remains to release required information to the Department of Veterans Affairs or a veterans' service organization to obtain verification for a veteran or a dependant's eligibility for burial in a state or national veterans' cemetery; and

(5) Specifies that a funeral establishment or a coroner who releases the required information is not liable for simple negligence in the disposition of the cremated remains of a veteran to a veterans' service organization for interment under specified conditions. The substitute reduces the time period, from within four months to within one month of the date of the first publication of the required notice, that the person entitled to the unclaimed remains must claim the remains or the remains may be given to a veterans' service organization for interment.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that they just want to make sure that the unclaimed remains of veterans are interred with the due respect they deserve.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Brown; Missouri Association of

Veterans' Organizations; Missouri Funeral Directors Association;
and Pat Roe Kerr.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.