

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1543

5 By: Representative Ennett
6 By: Senator D. Wallace
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE CEMETERY ACT FOR PERPETUALLY
10 MAINTAINED CEMETERIES; TO MODIFY THE LAW CONCERNING
11 THE STATE BOARD OF EMBALMERS, FUNERAL DIRECTORS,
12 CEMETERIES, AND BURIAL SERVICES; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

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17 TO AMEND THE CEMETERY ACT FOR PERPETUALLY
18 MAINTAINED CEMETERIES; AND TO MODIFY THE
19 LAW CONCERNING THE STATE BOARD OF
20 EMBALMERS, FUNERAL DIRECTORS, CEMETERIES,
21 AND BURIAL SERVICES.
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24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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26 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 20, Chapter 17, Subchapter 10, is
27 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

28 20-17-1031. Perpetual care cemetery – Duty to maintain.

29 A cemetery company that holds a permit to own and operate a perpetual
30 care cemetery under § 23-61-1101 et seq. shall properly care for, maintain,
31 and preserve the perpetual care cemetery.
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33 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 23-61-1103(a)(6), concerning the powers and
34 duties of the State Board of Embalmers, Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, and
35 Burial Services, is amended to read as follows:

36 (6) Suspend or revoke permits or licenses or impose a civil



1 penalty not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500) per violation when a
 2 licensee fails to comply with any of the laws governing the licensee or when
 3 a licensee fails to comply with a rule or order of the board;

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 5 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 23-61-1109(a), concerning the power of the
 6 State Board of Embalmers, Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, and Burial Services,
 7 is amended to read as follows:

8 (a) The State Board of Embalmers, Funeral Directors, Cemeteries, and
 9 Burial Services may:

10 (1)(A) Conduct periodic, special, or other examinations of a
 11 cemetery or cemetery company, including without limitation an examination of
 12 the physical condition or appearance of the cemetery, the financial condition
 13 of the cemetery company and any trust funds maintained by the cemetery
 14 company, and other examinations that the board or Insurance Commissioner
 15 deems necessary or appropriate in the public interest.

16 (B) An examination under subdivision (a)(1)(A) of this
 17 section shall be carried out by:

- 18 (i) A member or representative of the board;
- 19 (ii) A certified public accountant or registered
 20 public accountant as authorized under § 20-17-1007; or
- 21 (iii) The State Insurance Department;

22 (2) Issue or amend permits to operate a cemetery under this
 23 subchapter;

24 (3) Suspend or revoke permits to operate a cemetery when a
 25 cemetery fails to comply with this subchapter, rules promulgated under this
 26 subchapter, or any order of the board;

27 (4) Make rules and forms to enforce this subchapter;

28 (5) Require cemetery companies to observe minimum accounting
 29 principles and practices and make and keep the books and records for a period
 30 of time as the board may prescribe by rule;

31 (6) Require a cemetery company to properly care for, maintain,
 32 and preserve a cemetery;

33 (7) Require additional contributions to the permanent
 34 maintenance fund of the cemetery under this subchapter, including without
 35 limitation contributions not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000)
 36 whenever a cemetery company fails to properly care for and maintain or

1 preserve the cemetery;

2 (8) Apply to Pulaski County Circuit Court or the circuit court
 3 of the county in which the cemetery is located for appointment of a receiver
 4 or conservator of the cemetery company or its permanent maintenance fund when
 5 it appears to the board that a cemetery company is insolvent or that the
 6 cemetery company, its officers, directors, agents, or the trustees of its
 7 permanent maintenance fund, have violated this subchapter and the rules
 8 promulgated under this subchapter or have failed to comply with any board
 9 order;

10 ~~(8)~~(9) Increase by rule the amount of a deposit required under §
 11 20-17-1016 if the board determines that a greater sum is necessary to assure
 12 that the permanent maintenance fund will earn sufficient income to provide
 13 for the care and maintenance of the cemetery; and

14 ~~(9)(A)~~(10)(A) Purchase insolvent, licensed perpetual care
 15 cemeteries that have been in court-ordered receivership or conservatorship
 16 for at least five (5) years.

17 (B) If the taking of legal possession of the cemetery
 18 under subdivision ~~(a)(9)(A)~~ (a)(10)(A) of this section requires the payment
 19 of consideration, any payment made by the board shall not exceed one thousand
 20 dollars (\$1,000).

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