

SENATE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 4890

A bill to amend 1968 PA 251, entitled  
"Cemetery regulation act,"  
(MCL 456.521 to 456.543) by amending the title and by adding  
section 17.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1

TITLE

2

An act to regulate the creation and management of cemeteries;  
3 to provide for a cemetery commissioner and to prescribe the powers  
4 and duties of the commissioner; to require the registration and  
5 audit of cemeteries; to provide standards regarding the long-term  
6 care of certain cemeteries and trusting of certain funds; to  
7 regulate persons selling burial, entombment, or columbarium rights  
8 and certain merchandise; to provide for qualifications for owners,

1 operators, employees, and transferees of cemeteries under certain  
2 circumstances; TO PROVIDE FOR THE ABANDONMENT OF INTERMENT RIGHTS;  
3 to allow the cemetery commissioner to conduct certain  
4 investigations; and to prescribe administrative and civil remedies  
5 and penalties.

6 SEC. 17. (1) A PERSON POSSESSING A RIGHT TO A SPACE WITHIN A  
7 CEMETERY IS PRESUMED TO HAVE ABANDONED THE RIGHT IF ALL OF THE  
8 FOLLOWING APPLY:

9 (A) DURING THE PAST 60 YEARS, THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT  
10 TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE HAS NOT  
11 PROVIDED THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR WITH AN UPDATED ADDRESS FOR  
12 PURPOSES OF CONTACTING THE PERSON.

13 (B) DURING THE PAST 60 YEARS, THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT  
14 TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE HAS NOT  
15 CONTACTED THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR AND AFFIRMED POSSESSION OF  
16 THE RIGHT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

17 (i) REQUESTING AN INTERMENT OR NOTIFYING THE CEMETERY OWNER OR  
18 OPERATOR OF AN INTERMENT UNDER THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE.

19 (ii) REQUESTING THE INSTALLATION OF A MEMORIAL OR NOTIFYING THE  
20 CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR OF THE INSTALLATION OF A MEMORIAL UNDER  
21 THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE.

22 (iii) INDICATING OR REQUESTING A TRANSFER OF THE RIGHT TO THE  
23 SPACE TO ANOTHER PERSON.

24 (iv) MAKING A PAYMENT TO THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR  
25 RELATING TO THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE.

26 (v) AFFIRMING IN WRITING THE POSSESSION OF THE RIGHT TO THE  
27 SPACE.

1 (C) A MEMORIAL HAS NOT BEEN INSTALLED AT THE CEMETERY UNDER  
2 THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE.

3 (D) REMAINS HAVE NOT BEEN INTERRED AT THE CEMETERY UNDER THE  
4 RIGHT TO THE SPACE.

5 (2) IF, AFTER A RIGHT TO A SPACE IS PRESUMED TO BE ABANDONED  
6 UNDER SUBSECTION (1), ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS ARE MET,  
7 THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR MAY UNDER SUBSECTION (4) CERTIFY THE  
8 RIGHT AS ABANDONED:

9 (A) THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR POSTS ON THE SPACE FOR 120  
10 CONSECUTIVE DAYS A WRITTEN NOTICE OF INTENT TO CERTIFY THE RIGHT TO  
11 THE SPACE AS ABANDONED.

12 (B) IF THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR HAS A MAILING ADDRESS  
13 FOR THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S  
14 AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE, THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR SENDS TO  
15 THAT ADDRESS A WRITTEN NOTICE OF INTENT TO CERTIFY THE RIGHT TO THE  
16 SPACE AS ABANDONED. THE NOTICE SHALL BE SENT BY CERTIFIED MAIL WITH  
17 A RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED.

18 (C) IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS APPLY, THE CEMETERY  
19 OWNER OR OPERATOR PUBLISHES ONCE A WEEK FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS A  
20 NOTICE OF INTENT TO CERTIFY THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE AS ABANDONED IN  
21 A NEWSPAPER CIRCULATED IN THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE CEMETERY IS  
22 LOCATED:

23 (i) THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR DOES NOT HAVE A MAILING  
24 ADDRESS FOR THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE OR THE  
25 PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.

26 (ii) WHETHER OR NOT A WRITTEN NOTICE MAILED UNDER SUBDIVISION  
27 (B) IS RETURNED AS UNDELIVERABLE, THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT

1 TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE HAS NOT  
2 CONTACTED THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR AND AFFIRMED THE PERSON'S  
3 POSSESSION OF THE RIGHT WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER THE NOTICE WAS MAILED.

4 (D) IF PUBLICATION IS REQUIRED UNDER SUBDIVISION (C), 60 DAYS  
5 HAVE ELAPSED SINCE THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR PUBLISHED THE  
6 SECOND NOTICE AND THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE OR  
7 THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE HAS NOT CONTACTED THE  
8 CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR AND AFFIRMED THE PERSON'S POSSESSION OF  
9 THE RIGHT.

10 (3) A NOTICE REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (2) SHALL STATE ALL OF  
11 THE FOLLOWING:

12 (A) A DESCRIPTION OF THE RIGHT TO A SPACE AFFECTED.

13 (B) IF KNOWN TO THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR, THE NAME OF  
14 THE PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE AND THE PERSON'S  
15 AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE, IF ANY.

16 (C) THE TIME FRAME WITHIN WHICH A PERSON POSSESSING THE RIGHT  
17 TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE MUST CONTACT  
18 THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR AND AFFIRM THE PERSON'S POSSESSION  
19 OF THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE TO PREVENT THE RIGHT FROM BEING CERTIFIED  
20 AS ABANDONED.

21 (D) THAT, IF THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE IS CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED,  
22 A PERSON WHO POSSESSED THE RIGHT MAY BE ENTITLED TO THE REMEDIES  
23 SET FORTH IN SECTION 17 OF THE CEMETERY REGULATION ACT, 1968 PA  
24 251, MCL 456.537.

25 (E) THE NAME, ADDRESS, ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESS, AND TELEPHONE  
26 NUMBER OF THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR.

27 (4) A RIGHT TO A SPACE IS CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED BY ANY PERSON

1 POSSESSING THE RIGHT IF, AFTER SATISFYING THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
2 SUBSECTIONS (2) AND (3), THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR CREATES,  
3 SIGNS, AND MAINTAINS A RECORD THAT STATES ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

4 (A) A DESCRIPTION OF THE RIGHT TO A SPACE AFFECTED.

5 (B) THE NAMES OF ANY PERSONS POSSESSING THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE  
6 IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE RIGHT IS CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED, IF KNOWN TO  
7 THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR.

8 (C) THAT THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE IS PRESUMED TO BE ABANDONED  
9 UNDER THE CRITERIA SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (1).

10 (D) THAT THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR PROVIDED NOTICE IN  
11 COMPLIANCE WITH SUBSECTIONS (2) AND (3).

12 (E) THAT THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR HAS NOT RECEIVED A  
13 RESPONSE TO A NOTICE UNDER SUBSECTION (2) FROM A PERSON POSSESSING  
14 THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  
15 AFFIRMING THE PERSON'S POSSESSION OF THE RIGHT.

16 (5) A PERSON WHOSE RIGHT TO A SPACE WAS CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED  
17 UNDER SUBSECTION (4) IS ENTITLED ONLY TO THE FOLLOWING REMEDIES:

18 (A) REINSTATEMENT OF THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE IF THE RIGHT HAS  
19 NOT BEEN RESOLD OR OTHERWISE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER PERSON BY THE  
20 CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR.

21 (B) IF THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE HAS BEEN RESOLD OR OTHERWISE  
22 TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER PERSON BY THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR, AT  
23 THE OPTION OF THE PERSON WHOSE RIGHT WAS CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED,  
24 EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:

25 (i) A DIFFERENT RIGHT TO A SPACE OF COMPARABLE VALUE WITHIN THE  
26 CEMETERY.

27 (ii) COMPENSATION IN THE AMOUNT THAT THE PERSON WHOSE RIGHT WAS

1 CERTIFIED AS ABANDONED PAID FOR THE RIGHT OR IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO  
2 65% OF THE PRICE FOR WHICH THE RIGHT WAS RESOLD OR OTHERWISE  
3 TRANSFERRED BY THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR, WHICHEVER AMOUNT IS  
4 GREATER.

5 (6) IF A PERSON POSSESSING A RIGHT TO A SPACE WITHIN A  
6 CEMETERY OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IS NOTIFIED BY  
7 THE CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR UNDER SUBSECTION (2) AND THE PERSON  
8 OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE DOES NOT WISH TO RETAIN  
9 POSSESSION OF THE RIGHT, THE PERSON OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED  
10 REPRESENTATIVE MAY TRANSFER THE RIGHT TO THE SPACE BACK TO THE  
11 CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR FOR AN AMOUNT AS AGREED BY THE PARTIES.

12 (7) A CONTRACT FOR THE SALE OF A RIGHT TO A SPACE ENTERED INTO  
13 BY A CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS  
14 SECTION SHALL CONTAIN A WRITTEN NOTICE OF THE PRESUMPTION OF  
15 ABANDONMENT OF A RIGHT TO A SPACE UNDER SUBSECTION (1).

16 (8) A CEMETERY OWNER OR OPERATOR MAY PUBLISH ON 1 OR MORE  
17 INTERNET WEBSITES A NOTICE OF INTENT TO CERTIFY A RIGHT TO A SPACE  
18 AS ABANDONED UNDER SUBSECTION (2). A CEMETERY OWNER MAY USE AN  
19 INTERNET SEARCH TO ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY FOR USE UNDER SUBSECTION (2)  
20 THE CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS OF A PERSON POSSESSING A RIGHT TO A  
21 SPACE OR THE PERSON'S AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.

22 (9) SUBSECTIONS (1) TO (8) DO NOT APPLY TO A RIGHT TO A SPACE  
23 IF 1 OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY:

24 (A) AN INSCRIBED MEMORIAL IS LOCATED ON THE SPACE TO WHICH THE  
25 RIGHT APPLIES.

26 (B) BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY TO THE SPACE TO WHICH THE  
27 RIGHT APPLIES:

1 (i) THE SPACE IMMEDIATELY ADJOINS AN INSCRIBED MEMORIAL AND THE  
2 ADJOINING SIDE OF THE INSCRIBED MEMORIAL DISPLAYS A FAMILY SURNAME.

3 (ii) THE SPACE WAS PURCHASED WITH ANOTHER SPACE ON WHICH THE  
4 INSCRIBED MEMORIAL THAT DISPLAYS THE FAMILY SURNAME IS LOCATED.

5 (C) BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY TO THE SPACE TO WHICH THE  
6 RIGHT APPLIES:

7 (i) THE SPACE IMMEDIATELY ADJOINS AN INSCRIBED MEMORIAL.

8 (ii) THE SPACE IMMEDIATELY ADJOINS A SPACE THAT WAS PURCHASED  
9 WITH THE RIGHT TO A SPACE AND INCLUDES INTERRED REMAINS.

10 (10) THIS SECTION IS INTENDED TO ADVANCE THE SIGNIFICANT AND  
11 LEGITIMATE PUBLIC PURPOSE OF ENSURING THE AVAILABILITY AND  
12 PRODUCTIVE USE OF SPACE WITHIN CEMETERIES AND PROVIDING SECURITY IN  
13 RIGHTS CONSISTENT WITH THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF THE  
14 PEOPLE OF THIS STATE.

15 (11) AS USED IN THIS SECTION:

16 (A) "INSCRIBED MEMORIAL" MEANS 1 OR BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING:

17 (i) A STONE OR OTHER STRUCTURE OR ITEM THAT IS USED FOR THE  
18 PURPOSE OF MEMORIALIZING A DECEDENT ON A PLACE OF INTERMENT AND  
19 THAT DISPLAYS THE NAME OF A DECEDENT.

20 (ii) A STONE OR OTHER STRUCTURE OR ITEM THAT IDENTIFIES AN AREA  
21 OF A CEMETERY DEDICATED FOR THE INTERMENT OF MEMBERS OF A FAMILY  
22 AND THAT DISPLAYS A FAMILY SURNAME.

23 (B) "RIGHT TO A SPACE" OR "RIGHT" MEANS THE PRIVILEGE,  
24 LICENSE, OR RIGHT OF INTERMENT IN A SPACE IN A CEMETERY.

25 Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect January  
26 1, 2015.