

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5481

C 56 L 09
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning veterans' burials.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Marr, Becker, Hobbs, Haugen, Franklin, Parlette, Eide, Rockefeller, Hatfield, Jarrett, Jacobsen, Kilmer, Berkey, Tom, Swecker, King, Kastama, Shin, McDermott, Prentice, Fairley, Holmquist, Brandland, McCaslin, Ranker, McAuliffe, Roach, Honeyford and Kauffman).

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections
House Committee on Judiciary

Background: A person or entity in lawful possession of unclaimed human remains for a period of 90 days or more may dispose of the remains. The disposition of the unclaimed human remains must be in accordance with the rules adopted by the Washington State Cemetery Board and the Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) uses various records and databases to determine whether a decedent is eligible for interment at a state or federal veterans' cemetery. An individual must be a United States veteran discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, a veteran's spouse, or a veterans' dependent child to be eligible for internment at the National Veterans' Cemetery or Washington State Veterans' Cemetery.

Summary: Any deceased veteran or veteran's dependant that is left unclaimed for a period of 90 days or longer, and is certified by the DVA as eligible for internment at a federal or state veterans' cemetery, must be transferred from the person or entity in possession of such human remains to the custody of the DVA. The person or entity transferring the human remains to the DVA is immune from any liability associated with such transfer. The state, its employees, and agents are also immune from any liability related to the transfer of such human remains to the DVA.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0
House	97	0

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Effective: July 26, 2009