

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1069

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections, March 14, 2011

Title: An act relating to the disposition of unclaimed remains.

Brief Description: Regarding the disposition of unclaimed remains.

Sponsors: Representatives Alexander and Moeller.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/25/11, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections: 3/08/11, 3/14/11 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, TRIBAL RELATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Pridemore, Chair; Prentice, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, Chase, Nelson and Roach.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: Under current law, when an individual dies and the deceased has not arranged for the disposition of his or her remains and the deceased does not have family to provide for the disposition of the remains, the county coroner entrusts the remains to a funeral home in the county where the body is found. Entrustment of unclaimed remains is made on a rotational basis as established by the coroner in consultation with funeral home or mortuary representatives in the county involved. The rotation plan must treat equally all funeral homes or mortuaries wishing to participate.

Summary of Bill: A county coroner or medical examiner, using the qualified bidding process, may establish a preferred funeral home for the disposition of unclaimed remains from individuals who die without plans and lack anyone to provide for the disposition of his or her remains.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a simple bill that allows a bidding process to determine which funeral home will take unclaimed human remains. Affording county coroners and medical examiners the option of using competitive bidding to secure services provides them with flexibility and a cost-saving option.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Robert Carlton, Washington Association of County Officials.