

Approved: February 15, 2012

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vicki Schmidt at 1:30 p.m. on January 26, 2012, in Room 546-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Nobuko Folmsbee, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Renaë Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Iraida Orr, Legislative Research Department
Melissa Calderwood, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Long, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Pam Scott, Executive Director, Kansas Funeral Directors Association

Others attending:

See attached list.

The chair opened the hearing on **SB 303—Disposition of unclaimed cremated cremains; veterans cremated cremains.** Staff stated that this amends the procedures for a funeral establishment, branch establishment or crematory to dispose of unclaimed cremated remains in general and adds new provisions regarding the remains of military veterans. The funeral establishment may dispose of the remains if (1) nobody claims them for 90 days from the cremation; (1) notice is sent to an authorizing agent of cremation by certified mail, stating that remains would be disposed unless the agent responded to such notice within 30 days; and (3) the funeral establishment receives no response for 30 days. It gives funeral directors the legal authority to hand over unclaimed cremated remains of veterans to the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs or a national veteran's cemetery. The veteran's remains can be placed in a tomb, mausoleum, crypt or niche in a columbarium or be buried in a cemetery, but cannot be scattered.

The Chair recognized Pam Scott, Executive Director, Kansas Funeral Directors Association. Ms. Scott noted that there is a movement across the United States to see that unclaimed cremated remains of veterans are located, identified and interred. The program is called the Missing in American Project. The mission of the project is to provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes. This bill helps to accomplish this mission by allowing a funeral establishment, branch establishment or crematory to share appropriate personal information concerning the deceased with the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs (KCVA) or the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to determine whether the unclaimed cremated remains are those of a veteran. Under the bill, the funeral establishment, branch establishment, crematory funeral director and crematory operator

CONTINUATION SHEET

The minutes of the Public Health and Welfare Committee at 1:30 p.m. on January 26, 2012, in Room 546-S of the Capitol.

are discharged from any liability with regard to the releasing or sharing of such information with those entities for that purpose (Attachment #1).

There being no further discussion, the hearing on **SB 303** was closed.

The Chair called for final action on **SB 290—Addictions counselor licensure act.** *It was moved by Senator Brungardt, seconded by Senator Kelly to recommend **SB290**, as technically amended, favorably for passage. Motion carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 30, 2012.