

1999 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 745

Offered January 21, 1999

Requesting the Board of Professional and Occupational Regulation, in conjunction with the Virginia Cemetery Board and the Virginia Cemetery Association, to study the extent to which consumers experience dissatisfaction with products and services provided by cemeteries in Virginia other than those subject to regulation by the Commonwealth and the means available for protecting the interests of consumers who engage the services of nonregulated cemeteries.

Patrons—Diamonstein, Bloxom, Councill, Cranwell, Davies, Dillard, Keating, Moss and Putney;
Senators: Barry, Chichester, Colgan, Edwards, Gartlan, Holland, Saslaw, Wampler, Williams and Woods

Referred to Committee on General Laws

WHEREAS, for-profit cemeteries in Virginia have been required for years to register with the Office of Consumer Affairs within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which received and investigated consumer complaints relating to cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, the 1998 Session of the General Assembly created the Virginia Cemetery Board within the Department of Professions and Occupations to license for-profit cemeteries and maintain the registration of sales personnel of such cemeteries, with the regulations of the Cemetery Board to become effective on July 1, 2000; and

WHEREAS, for-profit cemeteries account for only a small percentage of all cemeteries in Virginia as well as a small percentage of the annual interments made in the Commonwealth, leaving most cemeteries in Virginia and most consumer transactions involving cemeteries exempt from the new state regulatory requirements; and

WHEREAS, neither the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services nor the Virginia Cemetery Board has or will have regulatory authority over cemeteries that operate on a nonprofit basis; and

WHEREAS, national and state media attention has focused recently on problems within the cemetery industry, occurring in many instances at cemeteries that are not subject to governmental regulation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Board of Professional and Occupational Regulation, in conjunction with the Virginia Cemetery Board and the Virginia Cemetery Association, be requested to study the extent to which consumers experience dissatisfaction with products and services provided by cemeteries in Virginia other than those subject to regulation by the Commonwealth and the means available for protecting the interests of consumers who engage the services of nonregulated cemeteries

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Board of Professional and Occupational Regulation for this study, upon request.

The Board of Professional and Occupational Regulation shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2000 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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