

Hugh LeMaster  
Maine Cemetery Association

Good morning honorable committee members of the hearing on LD 379 "An Act To Establish The Maine Cemetery Commission.". My name is Hugh H. LeMaster and I am Vice President of The Maine Cemetery Association. I believe today our President of M.C.A., Craig Cunningham of Oak Grove Cemetery in Bath, is present virtually for questions and comment on our associations behalf. A little more background on me. I am also currently Vice President of Monmouth Cemetery Association and its past president and secretary. I have been a Maine cemeterian sine about 1985. I am also a licensed Maine funeral director here in Augusta for Knowlton Hewins Roberts F.H. part time now and a full time memorialist for Collette Monuments, Inc. of Lewiston. As I am a member of the ad hock committee but unable to be present today I offer a brief bit of written testimony if I may on LD 379.

Lines 13 and 14 under permanent members I would like to ad "Maine Old Cemetery Association"

Lines 15 and 16 under Permanent Members I would Like to Ad the words "Maine Cemetery Association"

Under Duties I would like to change the word "Shall" in the opening line that says The Commission May, instead of May.

In addition the summary is still a bit vague in my opinion or needs more. My vision personally for this commission , at least in the future, is for the commission to have a bit of teeth or "enforcement powers as comparing to the Maine Board of Funeral service. Weather or not that clear responsibility is added now or later, I feel this should be the ultimate goal of the Commission. There are laws governing perpetual Care Funds, monies held in trust to operate cemeteries, Interments that can be done improperly, poor general maintenance is often reported, care of Veterans lots and memorials in cemeteries. This list is endless of items of importance that the commission could be responsible to ensure existing laws are obeyed and suggest new laws or changes to existing laws as cemeteries evolve over time and need for change becomes apparent.

Thank you for considering this LD and I sincerity hope the Commission is formed and cemeteries can experience much more focused oversight. The department of Environmental Heath is currently responsible for much of Maine's cemeteries. Not sure this is the best State agency or not? to continue as a point of contact as oversight or supervision of "The Commission" should it be formed.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter. Hugh H. LeMaster -V.P. Maine Cemetery Association.