

ASSEMBLY MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO  
**ASSEMBLY, No. 2613**

with committee amendments

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: JUNE 12, 2008

The Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly, No. 2613.

This bill provides veterans' organizations the right to receive the cremains of a veteran which have not been claimed by a relative or friend of the deceased within six months after cremation upon certification, to the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services' satisfaction, that a diligent effort has been made to identify, locate and notify a relative or friend of the deceased within that six month period.

Currently, under N.J.S.A. 26:7-18.2, cremains which have not been claimed by a relative or friend may be disposed of within one year after the date of cremation. By reducing the time period in which veterans' organizations may receive veterans' unclaimed cremains, veterans' organizations will be in a better position to provide proper, expedited burials befitting the servicemen and women who served this nation, and this State, during years of peace and in times of war.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The bill was amended to require that funeral directors grant veterans organizations and Veteran Service Organizations the right to receive the cremains. The amendments also specified that the veterans organizations receiving the cremains must be a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) tax-exempt veterans organizations or federally chartered Veterans Service Organizations. The cremains must have been unclaimed for one-year, not six months, and the organization would have to certify, to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, that a diligent effort was made to identify, locate, and notify a relative or friend of the deceased within that one-year period. The cremains must be scattered at sea or disposed of on land in a dignified manner at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery. Funeral homes, mortuaries, funeral directors and the veterans organizations and federally chartered Veterans Service Organization, will have immunity from liability for disposal of cremains pursuant to the bill's provisions, unless damages were the result of gross negligence or

willful misconduct. The effective date was changed from 60 days to five months.