



Substitute Senate Bill No. 282

Public Act No. 26-111

AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO THE NEGLECTED CEMETERY ACCOUNT, CONCERNING CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF WARTIME VETERANS' GRAVES AND ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR THE NOTIFICATION OF MUNICIPALITIES REGARDING SUCH GRAVES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 27-123 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

[In each city and town there shall be appointed annually, by the] (a) The chief executive authority of [the] each city or town [,] shall annually appoint a committee of three citizens of the city or town, who are veterans and whose duty it shall be to see that the grave of any person who served in time of war in the military or naval forces of the English colonies in America, prior to 1776, or of the state of Connecticut or in the armed forces of the United States, [shall be suitably kept and] is suitably cared for and maintained.

(b) If the cost of [such care and maintenance] suitably caring for and maintaining any grave described in subsection (a) of this section is not paid by private persons or by the trustees of the cemetery where any such grave is situated, [it] such cost shall be paid by the city or town; and cities and towns are authorized to appropriate money, and to apply

Substitute Senate Bill No. 282

for money available under section 19a-308b, for such purpose. Money so appropriated, or received under section 19a-308b, may be expended directly by the city or town or may be paid to the trustees or manager of the cemetery in which any such grave is [located] situated; but the sum paid in any year shall not exceed for any such grave the sum usually charged for the annual care and maintenance of a grave in the same cemetery or, if no such charge is made in that cemetery, it shall not exceed the sum charged in other cemeteries in the same city or town for such service, provided, when any such grave has settled appreciably, such sum may be exceeded.

Sec. 2. Section 19a-308 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

(a) In any town in which there is a burial ground or cemetery containing more than six places of interment that has been neglected and allowed to grow up to weeds, briars and bushes, or about which the fences have become broken, decayed or dilapidated, the selectmen of such town may cause such burial ground or cemetery to be cleared of weeds, briars and bushes, may mow the ground's lawn areas, [and] may cause its fences or walls to be repaired and kept in orderly and decent condition and its memorial stones to be straightened, repaired and restored and may otherwise suitably care for and maintain any grave described in subsection (a) of section 27-123, as amended by this act.

(b) No municipality or employee, officer or agent of a municipality shall be civilly or criminally liable for undertaking the care and maintenance of a burial ground or cemetery, as described in subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 3. (*Effective July 1, 2026*) The sum of one hundred thousand dollars shall be transferred from the resources of the General Fund to the neglected cemetery account established pursuant to section 19a-308b of the general statutes and credited to such account for the fiscal year

Substitute Senate Bill No. 282

ending June 30, 2027. Such funds may be used to make grants to eligible municipalities for municipal maintenance of neglected burial grounds and cemeteries, as described in section 19a-308 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) The Commissioner of Veterans Affairs shall make available on the Internet web site of the Department of Veterans Affairs a form through which any individual may submit information to the department concerning any grave described in subsection (a) of section 27-123 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that has not been suitably cared for and maintained as required under said section. Such form shall require that the individual include with such submission (1) the name of the burial ground or cemetery within which such grave is situated, (2) the city or town containing such burial ground or cemetery, (3) the name of the person interred in such grave, and (4) any other information the commissioner deems necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

(b) Not later than seven days after receipt of any submission described in subsection (a) of this section, the commissioner shall notify the chief executive authority of the city or town containing the burial ground or cemetery within which the grave is situated to (1) advise of such grave and provide the information included in such submission, (2) advise of the requirements of section 27-123 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, (3) direct that the committee appointed pursuant to subsection (a) of said section (A) be apprised of such grave and information, and (B) with respect to such grave and information, take any actions necessary for such city or town to comply with such requirements, and (4) advise of any moneys available, including, but not limited to, moneys available under section 19a-308b of the general statutes, that may be used to assist with such compliance.