HLS 15RS-999 ORIGINAL

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 592

1

BY REPRESENTATIVE RITCHIE

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

AN ACT

CEMETERY/BOARD: Provides for the regulation of cemetery authorities

2	To amend and reenact R.S. 8:70, 73, 75(A) and (B), 78, 201, 403, 456(A), 461(A)
3	(introductory paragraph) and (2) and (B), 462, 466, 506(B), and 606(A) and to enact
4	R.S. 8:705.1, relative to cemetery authorities; to increase certain regulatory,
5	application, and examination fees established by the Louisiana Cemetery Board; to
6	authorize the board to impose certain fines; to provide for exempt certificates of
7	authority; to provide for fees relative to renewal of exempt certificates of authority;
8	to clarify provisions relative to corporate entities engaged in cemetery business; to
9	provide relative to required content of annual reports of trustees and cemetery
10	authorities; to provide for application requirements and fees relative to sales of
11	cemetery space, rights of use, or interment in cemetery structures and gardens; to
12	provide for exemptions; to provide for technical corrections; and to provide for
13	related matters.
14	Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:
15	Section 1. R.S. 8:70, 73, 75(A) and (B), 78, 201, 403, 456(A), 461(A) (introductory
16	paragraph) and (2) and (B), 462, 466, 506(B), and 606(A) are hereby amended and reenacted
17	and R.S. 8:705.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:
18	§70. Application for certificate of authority
19	The initial application for a certificate of authority, including without
20	limitation an application for a new certificate required by R.S. 8:76, shall be made

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in writing by a cemetery authority to the board on a form prescribed by the board, accompanied by an application fee of five hundred set by the board not to exceed one thousand dollars. Applications for renewal of a valid, subsisting, and unsuspended certificate of authority shall be made in similar fashion, accompanied by the regulatory charge provided for in this Title. All initial applications must show that the cemetery authority owns or is actively operating a cemetery which is subject to the provisions of this Title.

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## §73. Regulatory charges; rate

A. Every cemetery authority shall pay, for each cemetery operated by it, an annual regulatory charge, as fixed by the board, of not more than five dollars for each interment, entombment, and inurnment made during the preceding full calendar year, but not less than twenty-five fifty dollars for each cemetery. Upon payment of said the applicable charges and compliance with the other provisions hereof and the rules and regulations of the board, the board shall issue a certificate of authority.

B. The board may increase the regulatory charge specified in Subsection A of this Section to not more than eleven twenty dollars to cover no more than the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses, including the cost of litigation.

\* \* \*

§75. Refusal to grant, revocation, or suspension of certificate; injunction; fines; additional orders

A. For violation of any provision of this Title <u>or the rules or regulations</u> adopted and promulgated by the board in accordance with the Administrative <u>Procedure Act</u>, the board may, in addition to imposing fines, refuse to grant, revoke, or suspend a certificate of authority and may institute legal proceedings to enjoin any person from operating or conducting a cemetery business.

B. If the board finds that one or more grounds exist for the discretionary suspension or revocation of a certificate of authority issued under pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter, it may, in lieu of or in addition to such suspension or

revocation, impose a fine upon the certificate holder in an amount not to exceed one thousand dollars for each non-willful violation and in an amount not to exceed ten thousand dollars for each willful violation, plus cost of the court reporter and the attorney fees of the board.

\* \* \*

## §78. Exemptions; exempt certificates of authority; renewal; fees

A. The provisions of this Chapter R.S. 8:70, 71, 72, 73 and 76 shall not apply to family burial grounds, fraternal cemeteries, municipal cemeteries, community cemeteries, state cemeteries, federal cemeteries, or religious cemeteries that do not sell cemetery spaces, sell the right of use or interment in any cemetery space, or charge a maintenance fee per cemetery space for an amount in excess of three hundred dollars.

B. The provisions of this Chapter R.S. 8:70, 71, 72, 73 and 76 shall not apply to community cemeteries owned and operated by nonprofit corporations in existence prior to January 1, 2007, whose officers and directors serve on a voluntary basis without compensation for their services.

C. The provisions of this Chapter R.S. 8:70, 71, 72, 73 and 76 shall not apply to columbarium facilities owned and operated by churches for the interment of human remains.

D. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, every cemetery authority or person, hereinafter in this Subsection referred to as the "applicant", seeking to be identified as a cemetery or columbarium facility that is exempt pursuant to the provisions of this Section, shall provide the board such proof as the board deems necessary to determine whether an applicant meets the qualifications for exemption. If the board determines that an applicant is qualified for exemption, the applicant shall apply for an exempt certificate of authority on a form prescribed by the board, accompanied by an application fee of two hundred fifty dollars to cover the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses associated with determining whether the applicant is in compliance with applicable provisions of this Title.

28

1	E.(1) No later than April 1 and in three year intervals thereafter, any
2	cemetery authority or person holding an exempt certificate of authority shall apply
3	for renewal of the certificate by submitting to the board such information as the
4	board deems necessary to determine if the cemetery authority or person continues
5	to meet the qualifications for exemption, in addition to a renewal fee of fifty dollars
6	to maintain the exemption previously granted.
7	(2) Failure to submit the required information or pay the prescribed renewal
8	fee by April 1 of the respective renewal interval shall affect the suspension of the
9	applicable exempt certificate of authority. The board shall assess a late charge of
10	twenty-five dollars to any cemetery authority or person making the submission of
11	information and payment of the prescribed fee after April 1 of the respective renewal
12	interval.
13	(3) The board may reinstate a suspended exempt certificate of authority after
14	April 1 of the respective renewal interval, if the cemetery authority or person submits
15	to the board the required information, payment of the prescribed renewal fee, and the
16	assessed late charge of twenty-five dollars.
17	F. At any time, if the board determines a cemetery authority or person no
18	longer meets the qualifications to maintain an exempt certificate of authority, such
19	cemetery authority or person shall begin the process of applying for a nonexempt
20	certificate of authority, as required by this Chapter, within thirty days of receipt of
21	written notice of the board's determination of nonexemption.
22	* * *
23	§201. Incorporation required
24	It is unlawful for any corporation, partnership, firm, trust, association, or
25	individual to engage in or transact any of the businesses of a cemetery within this
26	state except by means of a corporation authorized to operate a cemetery. Such
27	corporation shall only engage in the cemetery business in this state if it has received

a certificate of authority from the board pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 2 of

1	this title <u>Title</u> . The provisions of this Section shall not apply to a family burial
2	ground as defined in R.S. 8:1(22).
3	* * *
4	§403. Application fee; annual fee
5	The application shall be accompanied by an initial filing fee of fifty two
6	hundred fifty dollars for each cemetery sales organization and each cemetery
7	management organization. An annual fee of a like amount shall be paid. If ninety
8	percent or more of the applicant is owned by an existing cemetery authority
9	operating under the provisions of this Title, then the initial filing fee, as well as the
10	annual fee, shall be one-half of the sums set out herein.
11	* * *
12	§456. Annual account report by trustee; final accounting by trustee required
13	A.(1) Not later than sixty days after the receipt of the report required by R.S.
14	8:455, the trustee shall file with the board, with a copy to the clerk of the district
15	court for the parish in which the cemetery is located, an annual account report on a
16	form prescribed by the board showing in detail setting forth all of the following:
17	(a) All receipts and disbursements of cash, and all receipts and deliveries of
18	other trust property during the regular business year of said the cemetery authority,
19	and shall set forth a detailed list of all items of trust property in the trust at the end
20	of each <del>said</del> year.
21	(b) A statement showing the total amount of the endowment and perpetual
22	care trust funds invested in each of the investments authorized by law, and the
23	amount of cash on hand not invested.
24	(2) The report shall be verified by the president or vice president and one
25	other officer of the cemetery authority.
26	* * *
27	§461. Examination of endowment funds; expenses

1	A. The board shall examine the endowment care funds of each cemetery
2	authority governed by the provisions of this title Title, including those organized
3	before and after August 1, 1962, at the following time or times:
4	* * *
5	(2) Whenever the cemetery authority or trustee in charge of endowment or
6	perpetual care funds fails to file the reports required by this chapter Chapter.
7	* * *
8	B. The expense of the examination as provided herein shall not exceed fifty
9	two hundred fifty dollars per day for each examiner engaged in the examination, but
10	when the examination requires more than two days, the cost shall be paid by the
11	cemetery authority in an amount not to exceed a total of five hundred dollars, unless
12	irregularities are found, in which case the cemetery authority shall pay the full cost
13	of the examination. The examination shall be privately conducted in the principal
14	office of the cemetery authority or trustee.
15	§462. Examination expense; effect of refusal to pay; disposition
16	If a cemetery authority refuses to pay examination expenses, the board shall
17	may refuse it a certificate of authority and shall may revoke any existing certificate
18	of authority.
19	* * *
20	§466. Annual report of cemetery authority; contents, verification, certification
21	contents; fees
22	A. Each cemetery authority that has sold interment space subject to
23	endowment or perpetual care, including those cemetery authorities organized before
24	and after August 1, 1962, shall file with the board annually, on or before the thirtieth
25	day of June, a written report in form on a form prescribed by the board setting forth
26	all of the following:
27	(1) The amount collected for and deposited in the endowment or perpetual
28	care fund from the inception of the board to the thirty-first day of December of the
29	preceding year; and,

1	(2) A statement showing the total amount of the endowment and/or perpetual
2	care funds invested in each of the investments authorized by law and the amount of
3	cash on hand not invested, which statement shall show the actual financial condition
4	of the funds.
5	(1) The number of contracts written in the reporting period for the sale of
6	interment spaces or interment rights.
7	(2) The amount of gross sales or receipts from contracts of sales of all
8	interment spaces or interment rights and the amount of any discounts.
9	(3) The amount of gross sales or receipts from perpetual care contracts, if
10	any, sold separately from interment spaces or interment rights.
11	(4) The fair market value of interment spaces or interment rights provided
12	without charge.
13	(5) The amount of deposits due the endowment or perpetual care trust fund
14	for the reporting period and the dates the funds were deposited with the trustee.
15	<u>B.</u> The report shall be verified by the president or vice president and one
16	other officer of the cemetery authority and shall be certified by the accountant or
17	auditor preparing the same.
18	C. The cemetery authority shall pay to the board a report filing fee of not
19	more than five dollars for each contract subject to endowment or perpetual care
20	entered into in the annual report period, as specified in Subsection A of this Section.
21	Report filing fees shall be due and payable at the time of filing the report and shall
22	be used to cover the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses. Failure to pay report
23	filing fees within six months after the close of the business year shall result in a late
24	charge assessed by the board to the cemetery authority in the amount of one hundred
25	dollars.
26	* * *
27	§506. Examination by board; expenses
28	* * *
29	B. The expense of the examination as provided herein shall not exceed fifty
30	two hundred fifty dollars per day for each examiner engaged in the examination, but

1	when the examination requires more than two days, the cost shall be paid by the
2	cemetery authority or other entity in an amount not to exceed a total of five hundred
3	dollars, unless irregularities are found, in which case the cemetery authority or other
4	entity shall pay the full cost of the examination.
5	* * *
6	§606. Commencement and completion requirements; application form; application
7	<u>fee</u>
8	A.(1) Prior to the first sale of a cemetery space or the right of use or
9	interment in any cemetery space in a structure which has not yet been constructed,
10	the cemetery authority shall submit to the board <u>all of</u> the following:
11	(1)(a) A copy of the preliminary plans.
12	(2)(b) A map or plat delineating the sections, blocks, plots, avenues, walks,
13	halls, rooms, corridors, elevations, or other subdivisions, with descriptive name or
14	numbers.
15	(3)(c) A copy of all sales promotion material.
16	(4)(d) A copy of the pre-construction sales contract.
17	(2) The cemetery authority shall submit the information required in this
18	Subsection on an application form prescribed by the board, accompanied by an
19	application fee of two hundred fifty dollars to cover the board's reasonable and
20	ordinary expenses associated with determining compliance with applicable
21	provisions of this Title.
22	* * *
23	§705.1. Commencement requirements; application form; application fee
24	A.(1) Prior to the first sale of a cemetery space or the right of use or
25	interment in any cemetery space in a garden which has not yet been developed, the
26	cemetery authority shall submit to the board all of the following:
27	(a) A copy of the preliminary plans.
28	(b) A map or plat delineating the sections, blocks, plots, or other
29	subdivisions with descriptive names or numbers.
30	(c) A copy of all sales promotion material.

1	(d) A copy of the pre-construction sales contract.
2	(2) The cemetery authority shall submit the information required in this
3	Subsection on an application form prescribed by the board, accompanied by an
4	application fee of two hundred fifty dollars to cover the board's reasonable and
5	ordinary expenses associated with determining compliance with applicable
6	provisions of this Title.
7	Section 2. (A) This Section and all provisions as amended and reenacted and enacted
8	by Section 1 of this Act, except R.S. 8:78(E), shall become effective on August 1, 2015.
9	(B) The provisions of R.S. 8:78(E) as enacted by Section 1 of this Act shall become
10	effective on January 1, 2016.

## DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 592 Original

2015 Regular Session

Ritchie

**Abstract:** Makes various changes to regulatory rates, application requirements, and fees applicable to cemetery authorities.

<u>Present law</u> requires cemetery authorities to submit to the La. Cemetery Board, hereinafter the "board", an initial application for a certificate of authority. Further requires initial applications to be made in writing on a form prescribed by board, accompanied by an application fee of \$500. <u>Proposed law</u> changes the \$500 fee of <u>present law</u> to one set by the board not to exceed \$1,000.

<u>Present law</u> requires cemetery authorities to pay to the board an annual regulatory charge of not more than \$5 for each interment, entombment, and inurnment for each cemetery operated by the cemetery authority, but not less than \$25 annually for each cemetery. <u>Proposed law</u> changes the \$25 annual minimum for each cemetery <u>to</u> \$50.

<u>Present law</u> authorizes the board to increase the \$5 annual regulatory charge for each interment, entombment, and inurnment to not more than \$11 to cover no more than the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses, including the cost of litigation. <u>Proposed law</u> changes the \$11 maximum regulatory charge per interment, entombment, or inurnment to \$20.

<u>Present law</u> authorizes the board to impose a fine upon the holder of a certificate of authority for both willful and non-willful violations of <u>present law</u>. Further authorizes the board to impose a fine in lieu of suspension or revocation of the certificate of authority. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and authorizes the board to impose a fine <u>in addition to</u> suspension or revocation of a certificate of authority for such violations.

<u>Present law</u> exempts certain cemetery authorities from the requirements of <u>present law</u>. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and specifies certain provisions for which exemptions from <u>present law</u> no longer apply.

## Page 9 of 12

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ORIGINAL HB NO. 592

<u>Proposed law</u> requires cemetery authorities or persons seeking exemption pursuant to <u>present law</u> and <u>proposed law</u> to provide the board with the following: (1) Proof as the board deems necessary to determine whether the cemetery authority or person meets the qualifications for exemption, (2) an application for an exempt certificate of authority on a form prescribed by the board, and (3) a \$250 application fee.

<u>Proposed law</u> requires the renewal of exempt certificates of authority in 2016. Further requires the holder of an exempt certificate of authority to apply for renewal of the certificate by submitting to the board, by 4/1/2016 and in 3-year intervals thereafter, the following: (1) Information as the board deems necessary to determine if the holder of an exempt certificate of authority continues to meet exemption qualifications, and (2) a \$50 renewal fee to maintain the exemption previously granted.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides for the board's suspension of an exempt certificate of authority, if the holder does not timely submit the required information or \$50 renewal fee to the board. Further provides for a \$25 late charge for the untimely submission of information and \$50 renewal fee.

<u>Proposed law</u> authorizes the board to reinstate a suspended exempt certificate of authority, if the holder submits to the board the required information, payment of the \$50 renewal fee, and \$25 late charge.

<u>Proposed law</u> provides that if at any time the board determines that the holder of an exempt certificate of authority no longer qualifies to maintain such certificate, the holder is required to apply for a nonexempt certificate of authority within 30 days of receipt of written notice of the board's determination of nonexemption.

<u>Present law</u> requires a corporation, partnership, firm, trust, association, or individual engaging in or transacting cemetery business within the state of La. to be a corporation authorized to operate a cemetery. Further requires such corporation to have a certificate of authority from the board. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and exempts family burial grounds from the incorporation requirement of <u>present law</u>.

<u>Present law</u> requires an application and initial filing fee of \$50 for each person licensed to operate a cemetery sales organization or cemetery management organization. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and changes the initial filing fee <u>from</u> \$50 to \$250.

<u>Present law</u> requires a cemetery authority trustee to provide an annual report to the board that sets forth the following: (1) All receipts and disbursements of cash, (2) all receipts and deliveries of other trust property during the regular business year, and (3) a detailed list of all items of trust property in the trust at the end of each year. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present</u> law.

<u>Proposed law</u> requires the annual report of a cemetery authority trustee to be submitted on a form prescribed by the board and requires the report to set forth all of the following: (1) A statement showing the total amount of the endowment and perpetual care trust funds invested in each of the investments authorized by law, and (2) the amount of cash on hand not invested. <u>Proposed law</u> further requires the annual report to be verified by the president or vice president and one other officer of the cemetery authority.

<u>Present law</u> requires the board to examine endowment care funds of cemetery authorities at certain times provided in <u>present law</u>. Further requires an examination expense assessed to cemetery authorities not to exceed \$50 per day for each examiner. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and changes the maximum \$50 per day examination fee <u>to</u> a maximum of \$250 per day.

<u>Present law</u> requires the board to refuse a certificate of authority and revoke any existing certificate of authority, if a cemetery authority refuses to pay examination expenses. <u>Proposed law</u> changes <u>present law</u> to provide the board's discretion to refuse or revoke any

existing certificate of authority, if a cemetery authority refuses to pay such examination expenses.

<u>Present law</u> requires cemetery authorities selling interment space, subject to endowment or perpetual care, to provide an annual report to the board setting forth the following contents: (1) The amount collected for and deposited in the endowment or perpetual care fund from the inception of the board to the 31st day of December of the preceding year, and (2) a statement showing the total amount of endowment or perpetual care funds invested. Proposed law deletes the annual report content requirements of present law.

<u>Proposed law</u> requires such cemetery authorities selling interment space, subject to endowment or perpetual care, to provide an annual report to the board setting forth all of the following: (1) The number of contracts written in the reporting period for the sale of interment spaces or interment rights, (2) the amount of gross sales or receipts from contracts of sales of all interment spaces or interment rights and the amount of any discounts, (3) the gross sales or receipts from perpetual care contracts, if any, sold separately from interment spaces or interment rights, (4) the fair market value of interment spaces or interment rights provided without charge, and (5) the amount of deposits due the endowment or perpetual care trust fund for the reporting period and the dates the funds were deposited with the trustee.

<u>Present law</u> requires annual reports of cemetery authorities selling interment space, subject to endowment or perpetual care, to be verified by the president or vice president and one other officer of the cemetery authority and certification by the preparing accountant or auditor. Proposed law retains present law.

<u>Proposed law</u> further requires the cemetery authority selling interment space, subject to endowment or perpetual care, to pay a report filing fee of not more than \$5 for each contract entered into to cover the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses. Report filing fees are due and payable when filing the report. Further provides that failure to pay report filing fees within 6 months after the close of the business year results in a \$100 late charge assessed by the board to the cemetery authority.

Present law authorizes the board to examine the business of any cemetery authority or entity engaged in making contracts for the sale of personal property or contemplated services at certain times provided in present law. Further requires an examination expense assessed to cemetery authorities not to exceed \$50 per day for each examiner. Proposed law retains present law and changes the maximum \$50 per day examination fee to a maximum of \$250 per day.

<u>Present law</u> requires cemetery authorities to submit certain information to the board prior to the first sale of a cemetery space or right of use or interment in a structure not yet constructed. <u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and provides for the information required in <u>present law</u> to be submitted on an application form prescribed by the board along with a \$250 application fee to cover the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses.

<u>Proposed law</u> requires cemetery authorities to submit the following to the board prior to the first sale of a cemetery space or right of use or interment in any cemetery space in a garden not yet developed: (1) A copy of the preliminary plans, (2) a map or plat delineating the sections, blocks, plots, or other subdivisions with descriptive names or numbers, (3) a copy of all sales promotion material, and (4) a copy of the pre-construction sales contract.

<u>Proposed law</u> further requires information submitted on an application form prescribed by the board along with a \$250 application fee to cover the board's reasonable and ordinary expenses.

Proposed law provides for effective dates.

(Amends R.S. 8:70, 73, 75(A) and (B), 78, 201, 403, 456(A), 461(A) (introductory paragraph) and (2) and (B), 462, 466, 506(B), and 606(A); Adds R.S. 8:705.1)