

Report of the Governmental and Legal Affairs Committee

August 21, 2013

Submitted by committee chairman J.C. Barr

- We again addressed the issue of cemetery districts being prohibited from selling markers or monuments. We opposed this and had it killed before it even went anywhere. While the committee philosophically agreed that the government should not be competing with private enterprise, the health of the small cemetery district depends on revenue like marker sales to succeed. Additionally, local cemetery districts are part of the community that the locals want to support. Prohibiting a community from being able to buy a marker from their local community cemetery would not play well in ABC Rural City, WA. The bill also was specific to markers and monuments only and did not take into account urns, liners, inscriptions and the like. It was just a poor bill with a limited interest.
- The DOR tax change [among other things, taxing endowment care funds and proceeds] was a process that started several years ago. However, a rule making moratorium through 2012 prevented any progress on this issue. Once the moratorium was lifted, it came back on the radar screen. The purpose of the rule change is to clarify the language and be more inclusive and clear than it presently is. It had a proposed effective date of August 15. However, the bill as written the language had the unintended effect of a tax increase. The Legislative Committee met and directed the Legislative chair and our lobbyist to attend the hearing held on August 8 to express our position. The DOR agreed with the WCCFA that the existing draft fell short and delayed the implementation date. They also agreed on working with the WCCFA in the future to reach their goals.

Activity Summary

2 Legislative Committee Meetings Called.

4 House and Senate Hearings Attended.

2 Bills or Drafts Defeated.