

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023**

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**HOUSE BILL 178
Committee Substitute Favorable 5/2/23
Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 5/3/23**

Short Title: Maintenance of State Veterans Cemeteries.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

February 23, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
TO ENHANCE OVERALL MAINTENANCE OF THE STATE'S VETERANS
CEMETERIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (hereafter "Department") shall ensure that all four of the State's veterans cemeteries are staffed by employees who are able to operate and maintain the cemeteries in a manner that honors the State's veterans and their families. The Department shall identify and correct any issues at the State's veterans cemeteries related to (i) undue delays in installing headstones, (ii) damage to headstones, temporary markers, and graves caused by lawn equipment or vehicles, (iii) drainage and flooding problems, (iv) scattered debris and other items, and (v) overall grounds appearance, including bare patches due to lack of grass. In its efforts to comply with this section, the Department shall permit auxiliary and active military groups and other fraternal organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the North Carolina National Guard, and the ROTC, to volunteer to perform maintenance projects at the State's veterans cemeteries.

SECTION 1.(b) In order to better serve the families of our State's veterans, the Department shall adjust its policies to accommodate family requests relating to funeral services. The Department shall review its current policies and the reasons for those policies on the following: (i) chapel only services, (ii) the time allotted for funeral services, (iii) the number of attendees allowed to attend funeral services, and (iv) no visitation of grave sites while a funeral is being held.

SECTION 2. By October 1, 2023, the Department shall submit a report of its findings on (i) the issues set out in subsection (a) of Section 1 of this act and any changes made to address those issues and (ii) any changes made to the policies listed in subsection (b) of Section 1 of this act to the House and Senate Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on General Government and to the House Chairs of the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.

