

**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

1 AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
2 TO ENHANCE OVERALL MAINTENANCE OF THE STATE'S VETERANS
3 CEMETERIES.
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5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

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

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

