

Regular Session, 2008

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 183

BY REPRESENTATIVES MARCHAND AND SAM JONES

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs to study and make recommendations relative to issues related to the preservation of historic cemeteries and the creation of a historic cemetery preservation fund and to report its findings to the House of Representatives by April 15, 2009.

WHEREAS, cemeteries are among the most valuable historic resources of the state of Louisiana as cemeteries can reveal information about the historic events, religion, lifestyles, and genealogy of a local community; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being resting places for our dead, many of Louisiana's cemeteries are repositories of significant examples of art, architecture, and archaeology; and

WHEREAS, the importance of cemeteries should not be taken lightly, as cemeteries represent a substantial tourist attraction for the state of Louisiana, and also present an endless source of data for historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, and genealogists that collectively lead us to a better understanding of our own culture; and

WHEREAS, historic cemeteries face dramatic pressures from development, from abandonment and decay, from nature, and from vandals, and the demolition, destruction, and damage of historic cemeteries is a disrespectful practice; and

WHEREAS, existing state laws do not provide for adequate protection of historic cemeteries; and

WHEREAS, during the 2008 Regular Session of the Legislature, the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs held a hearing on House Bill No. 1092 which proposed to establish the Louisiana Cemetery Historic Preservation Program within the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism and additionally proposed the creation of the Louisiana Historic Cemetery Trust Fund in the state treasury to fund the program; and

WHEREAS, during the 2008 Regular Session of the Legislature, the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs held a hearing on House Bill No.

1334 which also proposed the creation of the Louisiana Historic Cemetery Trust Fund in the state treasury; and

WHEREAS, testimony in committee indicated that there was substantial support for the creation of a historic preservation program and the creation of the cemetery trust fund but also substantial opposition to the creation of the program and trust fund.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the House Committee on Municipal, Parochial and Cultural Affairs to study and make recommendations relative to issues related to the preservation of historic cemeteries and the creation of a historic cemetery preservation fund.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall specifically solicit the input, recommendations, and advice of those who can provide relevant information and suggestions to the committee based upon their expertise and experience, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) A representative of the office of the lieutenant governor.
- (2) A representative of the Department of Health and Hospitals, office of vital records.
- (3) A representative of the Louisiana Cemetery Board.
- (4) A representative of Save Our Cemeteries.
- (5) A representative of the National Trust for Historical Preservation, New Orleans Field Office.
- (6) A representative of the Louisiana Historical Society.
- (7) A representative of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.
- (8) A representative of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Natchitoches.
- (9) A representative of the Louisiana Landmark Society.
- (10) A representative of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Office of Cemeteries.
- (11) A representative of the Shreveport Historic Preservation Society.
- (12) A representative of the Kinder Cemetery Association located in Kinder, Louisiana.

(13) A representative of the Oakland Cemetery Preservation Society located in Shreveport, Louisiana.

(14) A representative of the Friends of Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery.

(15) A representative of the Liberty Chapel Cemetery Association located in Dry Prong, Louisiana.

(16) A representative of the St. Martinville Cemetery.

(17) A representative of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Office of Cemeteries.

(18) A representative of the historic cemeteries (Magnolia and Highland Cemeteries) located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

(19) A representative of the Sweet Olive Cemetery located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

(20) A representative of the Fenten Cemetery Association located in Fenten, Louisiana.

(21) A representative of the Louisiana Funeral Directors Association.

(22) A representative of the Crescent City Funeral Directors Association.

(23) A representative of the Louisiana Cemetery Association.

(24) A representative of the Louisiana Funeral Directors and Morticians Association.

(25) A representative of the Louisiana Monument Dealers Association.

(26) A representative of the Louisiana State Board of Embalmers.

(27) A representative of the Friends of the Greenwood Cemetery of Shreveport.

(28) A representative of the city of Franklin Historic District Commission.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all departments, boards, agencies, officers, and institutions of the state and all subdivisions thereof shall cooperate with the committee in providing information to assist the committee in carrying out its responsibility pursuant to this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall report the results of its study and its recommendations, including proposed legislation, to the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana by April 15, 2009.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES