

1 ENGROSSED HOUSE
2 BILL NO. 1067

By: Hardin (Tommy), Boles,
Fugate, and Luttrell of the
House

3
4 and

Simpson of the Senate

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8 An Act relating to veterans; creating the Dignity in
9 Burial Act; directing the Oklahoma Department of
10 Veterans Affairs to establish a program to ensure
11 dignified burial for certain veterans; describing
12 program purpose; providing a burial grant to
13 reimburse certain expenses of eligible persons;
14 setting maximum amount of reimbursement; providing
15 eligibility requirements for program; requiring
16 Executive Director to determine final approval of
17 applications; directing reimbursement from Indigent
18 Veteran Burial Revolving Fund; providing alternate
19 funds if there are insufficient resources; requiring
20 development of application process for program;
21 directing Oklahoma Veterans Commission to promulgate
22 rules; providing for codification; and providing an
23 effective date.
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BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 35 of Title 72, unless there is
created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Dignity in
Burial Act".

1 B. The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs shall establish
2 a program to ensure a dignified burial for honorably discharged
3 veterans of the United States Armed Forces who, prior to death,
4 lacked the financial capacity to prepare for or to provide for an
5 interment or cremation befitting a veteran of the United States
6 Armed Forces. The program shall aid in obtaining any available
7 burial benefits from the United States Department of Veterans
8 Affairs or through private organizations. The program shall provide
9 a burial grant for any veteran or any person who qualifies for
10 reimbursement, as determined by the Oklahoma Department of Veterans
11 Affairs, for unpaid expenses directly resulting from interment or
12 cremation. The maximum amount of reimbursement, not including
13 private funds, shall not exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per
14 application.

15 C. Eligibility requirements for the program shall be as
16 follows:

17 1. The deceased shall be a veteran as defined in Section 2 of
18 Title 72 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

19 2. The veteran shall have died in Oklahoma;

20 3. The veteran shall not have been in the custody of the
21 Department of Corrections at the time of death;

22 4. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing the
23 burial location of the deceased veteran's remains in a cemetery or
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1 the location where the deceased veteran's cremains have been
2 permanently placed;

3 5. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing that
4 the deceased veteran was provided an appropriate casket if the
5 deceased veteran was interred; and

6 6. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing that
7 the deceased veteran received a proper memorial headstone or marker
8 at the place of his or her interment as provided in 38 U.S.C.,
9 Section 2306 or that a memorial headstone or marker meeting the same
10 physical standards for size, material, composition, placement, and
11 informational content was provided in the event the deceased veteran
12 did not qualify under the provisions of 38 U.S.C., Section 2306.

13 D. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Department of
14 Veterans Affairs or his or her designee shall make final approval of
15 the Dignity in Burial Act applications, shall determine whether the
16 deceased meets eligibility criteria, and may approve funds to
17 reimburse the costs of interment or cremation.

18 E. Reimbursement shall be paid from the Indigent Veteran
19 Burial Revolving Fund provided in Section 34 of Title 72 of the
20 Oklahoma Statutes. If there are insufficient resources in the
21 Indigent Veteran Burial Revolving Fund, payment shall be made from
22 the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Revolving Fund.

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1 F. An application process for the implementation of this
2 program shall be developed by the Oklahoma Department of Veterans
3 Affairs.

4 G. Rules for the implementation of this program shall be
5 promulgated by the Oklahoma Veterans Commission.

6 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2022.

7 Passed the House of Representatives the 9th day of March, 2022.

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Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

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Passed the Senate the ____ day of _____, 2022.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate

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