STATE OF NEW YORK

2034

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SMULLEN, TAGUE, E. BROWN, K. BROWN, PALMESANO, MANKTELOW, MAHER, McDONOUGH, LEMONDES, BRABENEC, GALLAHAN, HAWLEY, BENDETT, DeSTEFANO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing an adopt-a-rural cemetery program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 144-b to read as follows:

§ 144-b. Adopt-a-rural cemetery program. 1. The secretary of state shall develop and implement an adopt-a-rural cemetery program the purposes of which shall include, but not be limited to, improving, repairing, and maintaining cemeteries in rural communities which are registered with and overseen by the division of cemeteries and are located in any municipality except in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants. A municipality may opt to participate in the program. The program shall include but not be limited to:

(a) coordinating services by volunteers or groups to improve, repair and maintain cemeteries; and

(b) providing and installing appropriate signs identifying those volunteers or groups adopting particular rural cemeteries.

2. (a) Signs described in paragraph (b) of subdivision one of this section must:

(i) be placed at the main entrance of the cemetery alongside or below any existing cemetery signage;

(ii) match and conform to the style, color, type, font, and likeness of any existing cemetery signage, including any historic preservation requirements;

(iii) be devoid of any corporate logos, trademarks, and images;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(iv) be limited in size to no more than half the dimensions of the largest existing cemetery signage at the location in which it shall be placed; and

(v) meet any other requirements that the department of state may add.

(b) If there is no existing signage at a cemetery, the sign for identifying those volunteers or groups adopting particular rural cemeteries shall be constructed in accordance with how the cemetery corporation or municipality which owns the cemetery shall see fit but shall be devoid of any corporate logos, trademarks, and images.

3. The secretary of state is authorized and directed to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement and carry out the provisions of this section including but not limited to:

(a) the number of years that volunteers or groups may adopt a rural cemetery; and

(b) the requirements that must be met in order to continue to be the adopter of a cemetery.

4. The program will be funded through existing appropriations within the department of state for the reimbursement of maintenance and the designing, construction, and installation of the signage identifying those volunteers or groups adopting particular rural cemeteries.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.