

Date of Hearing: July 16, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
SB 344 (Weber Pierson) – As Amended March 20, 2025

Policy Committee: Business and Professions

Vote: 17 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill prohibits cremated or hydrolyzed human remains from being scattered from a “dock attached to the shore.”

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) The Cemetery and Funeral Bureau (Bureau) anticipates no costs.
- 2) To the extent this bill makes it easier to prosecute illegal scatterings of human remains, this bill creates potential cost pressures of an unknown amount on the courts. Because scattering human remains close to the shoreline, including from bridges and piers, is largely illegal now, the increase in cases resulting from this bill, while unknown, is likely small.
- 3) Any local enforcement costs are not reimbursable by the state.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

With San Diego having so much water front property, it is critical that the public know that the scattering of cremated human remains [is prohibited from] docks. We keep remains from being spread from bridges and piers, it’s also important we extend this prohibition to docks as well.

There is no registered support or opposition for this bill.

- 2) **Background.** The Bureau, under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), administers and enforces the Cemetery and Funeral Act. An advisory committee comprised of representatives of both the industry and the public assists the Bureau in engaging consumers and licensees in its regulatory activities. The Bureau’s licensing program includes funeral establishments and directors; embalmers and apprentice embalmers; and cremated remains disposers, crematories, crematory managers, and hydrolysis (water cremation) facilities.

Any person with the legal right to control the disposition of a deceased person can scatter cremated or hydrolyzed remains, subject to local, state, and federal regulation. Existing law makes specified acts relating to human remains, including improperly disposing of human remains, a crime.

Existing law authorizes cremated remains or hydrolyzed human remains to be taken by boat from any harbor in the state, or by air, and scattered at sea. Existing law specifies that “at sea” includes the inland navigable waters of the state, but does not include lakes and streams. For scatterings at sea, state law requires the person with control over the disposition of the remains to file specified information with the county nearest the point where the remains are scattered. Existing law prohibits the scattering of cremated human remains or hydrolyzed human remains at sea within 500 yards of the shoreline or from a bridge or pier.

This bill additionally specifies that cremated remains may not be scattered from a “dock attached to the shore.”

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