
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6261

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senate Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Padden, Pedersen, and Miloscia)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/16.

1 AN ACT Relating to human remains; amending RCW 68.50.050 and
2 68.50.020; and prescribing penalties.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 68.50.050 and 2011 c 96 s 48 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) Any person, not authorized or directed by the coroner or
7 ((his)) medical examiner or ((her)) their deputies, who removes the
8 body of a deceased person not claimed by a relative or friend, or
9 ((who came to their death by reason of violence or from unnatural
10 causes or where there shall exist reasonable grounds for the belief
11 that such death has been caused by unlawful means at the hands of
12 another)) moves, disturbs, molests, or interferes with the human
13 remains coming within the jurisdiction of the coroner or medical
14 examiner as set forth in RCW 68.50.010, to any undertaking rooms or
15 elsewhere, or any person who knowingly directs, aids, or abets such
16 unauthorized moving, disturbing, molesting, or taking, and any person
17 who ((in any way)) knowingly conceals the ((body of a deceased person
18 for the purpose of taking the same to any undertaking rooms or
19 elsewhere)) human remains, shall in each of said cases be guilty of a
20 gross misdemeanor ((and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by
21 fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment in the

1 ~~county jail for up to three hundred sixty four days or by both fine~~
2 ~~and imprisonment in the discretion of the court)).~~

3 (2) In evaluating whether it is necessary to retain jurisdiction
4 and custody of human remains under RCW 68.50.010, 68.50.645, and
5 27.44.055, the coroner or medical examiner shall consider the
6 deceased's religious beliefs, if known, including the tenets,
7 customs, or rites related to death and burial.

8 (3) For purposes of this section and unless the context clearly
9 requires otherwise, "human remains" has the same meaning as defined
10 in RCW 68.04.020. Human remains also includes, but is not limited to,
11 skeletal remains.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 68.50.020 and 1987 c 331 s 55 are each amended to
13 read as follows:

14 It shall be the duty of every person who knows of the existence
15 and location of ((~~a dead body~~)) human remains coming under the
16 jurisdiction of the coroner or medical examiner as set forth in RCW
17 68.50.010 or 27.44.055, to notify the coroner or medical examiner
18 thereof in the most expeditious manner possible, unless such person
19 shall have good reason to believe that such notice has already been
20 given. Any person knowing of the existence of such ((~~dead body~~))
21 human remains and not having good reason to believe that the coroner
22 has notice thereof and who shall fail to give notice to the coroner
23 as aforesaid, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. For purposes of this
24 section and unless the context clearly requires otherwise, "human
25 remains" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 68.04.020. Human
26 remains also includes, but is not limited to, skeletal remains.

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