



Legislative
Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

SB 19-027

REVISED FISCAL NOTE

(replaces fiscal note dated January 15, 2019)

Drafting Number:	LLS 19-0386	Date:	January 30, 2019
Prime Sponsors:	Sen. Crowder; Winter Rep. Valdez D.	Bill Status:	House Judiciary
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Bill Topic: COUNTY AUTHORITY UNCLAIMED BODY FINAL DISPOSITION

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

This bill authorizes the use of any lawful method for the final disposition of an unclaimed dead body. This bill potentially reduces county expenditures on an ongoing basis beginning in FY 2019-20.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status: This fiscal note reflects the reengrossed bill.

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, a county must bury an unclaimed dead body at the expense of the county after following certain procedures. This bill authorizes a public officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision of the state, a coroner, or a person who has control over an unclaimed dead body to use any lawful method for the final disposition of an unclaimed body including cremation and makes conforming amendments. This bill also extends the period for notifying the anatomical board of the unclaimed body to five days, after reasonable effort is made to identify a family member, friend, or representative.

Local Government

Beginning in FY 2019-20, this bill potentially decreases county costs by allowing counties to use any legal method of disposing of an unclaimed dead body. Savings will occur to the extent that a county chooses to cremate rather than bury an unclaimed body. Any savings will vary by county depending on the number of unclaimed bodies and the cost of the method of final disposition. For informational purposes, rural counties are estimated to dispose of up to five unclaimed bodies per year and urban counties are estimated to dispose of approximately 20 unclaimed bodies per year. Burial costs are estimated to be \$5,000 while cremation costs are estimated to be \$2,000 per unclaimed body; therefore, rural counties choosing to cremate unclaimed bodies will save up to \$15,000 per year while urban counties will save approximately \$60,000. To the extent that the additional time provided results in the finding of a family member, friend, or relative to take possession of the body, these impacts will be reduced.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect August 2, 2019, if the General Assembly adjourns on May 3, 2019, as scheduled, and no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties	County Coroners	Local Affairs
Municipalities	Sheriffs	Special Districts