

SENATE BILL 292

By Watson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 38;
Title 46; Title 62 and Title 68, relative to human
remains.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 4, Part 1, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

68-4-113.

Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the coroner or county medical examiner may direct the cremation of an unclaimed dead body provided:

- (1) Proper notice is given in accordance with § 68-4-103;
- (2) The body is held for the time period provided in § 68-4-103; and
- (3) If the identity of the body is unknown, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)

from the body is retained and stored by the coroner or county medical examiner in a manner determined appropriate by the coroner or county medical examiner for the purpose of identifying the body at a later date.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-4-103(c), is amended by deleting the subsection and by substituting instead the following:

(c) If the chief medical examiner or the chief medical examiner's representative, upon receipt of the notification, does not, within twenty-four (24) hours, make a demand for the body, then it shall be buried as provided by law or cremated in accordance with § 68-4-113.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 38-5-118, is amended by deleting the section and substituting instead the following:

After the inquisition, the coroner may deliver the body of the deceased to the deceased's relatives, if there are any; but, if not, the coroner shall cause the deceased to be decently buried or cremated in accordance with § 68-4-113, and the expense to be paid from the property found with the body, or, if there is none, from the county treasury, by certifying an account of the expenses to the county mayor, who shall allow and pay the expenses, if deemed reasonable, as other claims on the county.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.