

SUBSTITUTE FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 4639

A bill to amend 1998 PA 386, entitled  
"Estates and protected individuals code,"  
by amending sections 3206 and 3209 (MCL 700.3206 and 700.3209),  
section 3206 as amended by 2008 PA 41 and section 3209 as added by  
2006 PA 299.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

1       Sec. 3206. (1) Subject to 1953 PA 181, MCL 52.201 to 52.216,  
2 ~~and to~~ part 28 and article 10 of the public health code, 1978 PA  
3 368, MCL 333.2801 to 333.2899 and 333.10101 to 333.11101, **AND**  
4 **SUBSECTION (11)**, a person with priority under subsections (2) to  
5 (4) or acting under subsection (5), (6), (7), or (8) is presumed to  
6 have the right and power to make decisions about funeral  
7 arrangements and the handling, disposition, or disinterment of a  
8 decedent's body, including, but not limited to, decisions about

1 cremation, and the right to possess cremated remains of the  
2 decedent. The handling, disposition, or disinterment of a body  
3 shall be under the supervision of a person licensed to practice  
4 mortuary science in this state.

5 (2) The surviving spouse or, if there is no surviving spouse,  
6 the individual or individuals 18 years of age or older, in the  
7 highest order of priority under section 2103, and related to the  
8 decedent in the closest degree of consanguinity, have the rights  
9 and powers under subsection (1).

10 (3) If the surviving spouse or the individual or individuals  
11 with the highest priority as determined under subsection (2) do not  
12 exercise their rights or powers under subsection (1) or cannot be  
13 located after a good-faith effort to contact them, the rights and  
14 powers under subsection (1) may be exercised by the individual or  
15 individuals in the same order of priority under section 2103 who  
16 are related to the decedent in the next closest degree of  
17 consanguinity. If the individual or each of the individuals in an  
18 order of priority as determined under this subsection similarly  
19 does not exercise his or her rights or powers or cannot be located,  
20 the rights or powers under subsection (1) pass to the next order of  
21 priority, with the order of priority being determined by first  
22 taking the individuals in the highest order of priority under  
23 section 2103 and then taking the individuals related to the  
24 decedent in the closest or, as applicable, next closest degree of  
25 consanguinity in that order of priority.

26 (4) If 2 or more individuals share the rights and powers  
27 described in subsection (1) as determined under subsection (2) or

1 (3), the rights and powers shall be exercised as decided by a  
2 majority of the individuals. If a majority cannot agree, any of the  
3 individuals may file a petition under section 3207.

4 (5) If no individual described in subsections (2) and (3)  
5 exists, exercises the rights or powers under subsection (1), or can  
6 be located after a sufficient attempt as described in subsection  
7 (9), and if subsection (6) does not apply, then the personal  
8 representative or nominated personal representative may exercise  
9 the rights and powers under subsection (1), either before or after  
10 his or her appointment.

11 (6) If no individual described in subsections (2) and (3)  
12 exists, exercises the rights or powers under subsection (1), or can  
13 be located after a sufficient attempt as described in subsection  
14 (9), and if the decedent was under a guardianship at the time of  
15 death, the guardian may exercise the rights and powers under  
16 subsection (1) and may make a claim for the reimbursement of burial  
17 expenses as provided in section 5216 or 5315, as applicable.

18 (7) If no individual described in subsections (2) and (3)  
19 exists, exercises the rights or powers under subsection (1), or can  
20 be located after a sufficient attempt as described in subsection  
21 (9), if the decedent died intestate, and if subsection (6) does not  
22 apply, a special personal representative appointed under section  
23 3614(c) may exercise the rights and powers under subsection (1).

24 (8) If there is no person under subsections (2) to (7) to  
25 exercise the rights and powers under subsection (1), 1 of the  
26 following, as applicable, shall exercise the rights and powers  
27 under subsection (1):

1 (a) Unless subdivision (b) applies, the county public  
2 administrator, if willing, or the medical examiner for the county  
3 where the decedent was domiciled at the time of his or her death.

4 (b) If the decedent was incarcerated in a state correctional  
5 facility at the time of his or her death, the director of the  
6 department of corrections or the designee of the director.

7 (9) An attempt to locate a person described in subsection (2)  
8 or (3) is sufficient if a reasonable attempt is made in good faith  
9 by a family member, personal representative, or nominated personal  
10 representative of the decedent to contact the person at his or her  
11 last known address, telephone number, or electronic mail address.

12 (10) This section does not void or otherwise affect an  
13 anatomical gift made under part 101 of the public health code, 1978  
14 PA 368, MCL 333.10101 to 333.10123.

15 (11) IF ALL OF THE FOLLOWING APPLY, SUBSECTIONS (2) TO (8) DO  
16 NOT APPLY AND THE DESIGNATED PERSON HAS THE RIGHTS AND THE POWERS  
17 UNDER SUBSECTION (1):

18 (A) THE DECEDENT WAS A SERVICE MEMBER WHO DESIGNATED A PERSON  
19 TO DIRECT DISPOSITION OF THE SERVICE MEMBER'S REMAINS ACCORDING TO  
20 A STATUTE OF THE UNITED STATES OR A REGULATION, POLICY, DIRECTIVE,  
21 OR INSTRUCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

22 (B) THE DESIGNATED PERSON IS THE SURVIVING SPOUSE, AN ADULT  
23 BLOOD RELATIVE, OR AN ADOPTIVE RELATIVE OF THE DECEDENT OR, IF THE  
24 SURVIVING SPOUSE, AN ADULT BLOOD RELATIVE, OR AN ADOPTIVE RELATIVE  
25 OF THE DECEDENT CANNOT BE FOUND, A PERSON STANDING IN LOCO  
26 PARENTIS.

27 (C) THE DESIGNATED PERSON IS ABLE AND WILLING TO EXERCISE THE

1 RIGHTS AND POWERS ENUMERATED IN SUBSECTION (1).

2 (12) ~~(11)~~ As used in this section: ~~"nominated~~

3 (A) "ARMED FORCES" MEANS THAT TERM AS DEFINED IN SECTION 2 OF  
4 THE VETERAN RIGHT TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ACT, 1994 PA 39, MCL  
5 35.1092.

6 (B) "MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD" MEANS THAT TERM AS DEFINED IN  
7 SECTION 105 OF THE MICHIGAN MILITARY ACT, 1967 PA 150, MCL 32.505.

8 (C) "NOMINATED personal representative" means a person  
9 nominated to act as personal representative in a will that the  
10 nominated person reasonably believes to be the valid will of the  
11 decedent.

12 (D) "SERVICE MEMBER" MEANS A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES, A  
13 RESERVE BRANCH OF THE ARMED FORCES, OR THE MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD.

14 Sec. 3209. (1) A funeral establishment is not required to file  
15 a petition under section 3207 and is not civilly liable for not  
16 doing so.

17 (2) The DESIGNATION OF A PERSON AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION  
18 3206(11) OR THE order of priority determined under section 3206(2)  
19 and (3) may be relied upon by a funeral establishment. A funeral  
20 establishment is not a guarantor that a person exercising the  
21 rights and powers under section 3206(1) has the legal authority to  
22 do so. A funeral establishment does not have the responsibility to  
23 contact or independently investigate the existence of relatives of  
24 the deceased, but may rely on information provided by family  
25 members of the deceased.

26 (3) A funeral establishment, holder of a license to practice  
27 mortuary science issued by this state, cemetery, crematory, or an

1 officer or employee of a funeral establishment, holder of a license  
2 to practice mortuary science issued by this state, cemetery, or  
3 crematory may rely on the terms of sections 3206 and 3207 and this  
4 section and the instructions of a person described in section  
5 3206(2) to (8) **OR (11)**, or of an individual determined in an action  
6 under section 3208 to be the party to exercise the rights and  
7 powers under section 3206(1), regarding funeral arrangements and  
8 the handling, disposition, or disinterment of a body and is not  
9 civilly liable to any person for the reliance if the reliance was  
10 in good faith.