

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

## **2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**Enrolled**

### **Senate Bill 257**

BY SENATOR GRADY

[Passed April 9, 2025; in effect 90 days from passage

(July 8, 2025)]



1 AN ACT to amend and reenact §37-13A-1 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended,  
2 relating to protecting landowners who allow others to access cemeteries from their private  
3 property or roadway; and ensuring that those persons who damage private property are  
4 solely responsible for any costs of repair associated therein.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

**ARTICLE 13A. GRAVES LOCATED UPON PRIVATELY OWNED LANDS.**

**§37-13A-1. Access of certain persons to cemeteries and graves located on private land;  
limiting liability of landowners.**

1 (a) Any authorized person who wishes to visit a cemetery or grave site located on privately  
2 owned land and for which no public ingress or egress is available, shall have the right to  
3 reasonable ingress or egress for the purposes described in subsection (c) of this section after  
4 providing the owner of the privately owned land with reasonable notice as defined in subsection  
5 (b) of this section.

6 (b) An authorized person intending to visit the cemetery or grave site for the purpose of  
7 installing a monument or grave marker pursuant to subdivision (2), subsection (c) of this section,  
8 shall give reasonable notice to the property owner which is to include a description of the  
9 monument or grave marker to be installed. As used in this article, "reasonable notice" means  
10 written notice of the date and time the authorized person intends to visit the cemetery or grave  
11 site delivered to the property owner at least 10 days prior to the date of the intended visit.

12 (c) The right of access to cemeteries or grave sites provided in subsection (a) of this  
13 section shall be during reasonable hours and only for the purposes of:

14 (1) Visiting graves;

15 (2) Maintaining the grave site or cemetery, including the installation of a monument or a  
16 grave marker: *Provided*, That a property owner may deny access to the cemetery or grave site  
17 because the owner objects to the installation of the type or style of the monument or grave marker  
18 that has been described in the notice given pursuant to subsection (b) of this section;

19 (3) Burying a deceased person in a cemetery plot by those granted rights of burial to that  
20 plot; and

21 (4) Conducting genealogy research.

22 (d)(1) The access route to the cemetery or grave site may be designated by the landowner  
23 if no traditional access route is obviously visible by a view of the property. If no traditional access  
24 route is obviously visible by a view of the property, the landowner is not required to incur any  
25 expense in improving a designated access route.

26 (2) Unless the property owner has caused a traditional access route to the cemetery or  
27 grave site to be unusable or unavailable, the property owner is not required to make any  
28 improvements to their property to satisfy the requirement of providing reasonable ingress and  
29 egress to a cemetery or burial site pursuant to this section.

30 (e) A property owner who is required to permit authorized persons reasonable ingress and  
31 egress for the purpose of visiting a cemetery or grave site and who acts in good faith and in a  
32 reasonable manner pursuant to this section is not liable for any personal injury or property damage  
33 that occurs in connection with the access to the cemetery or grave site.

34 (f) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or modify the power or authority of a  
35 court in any action of law or equity to order the disinterment and removal of the remains from a  
36 cemetery and interment in a suitable location.

37 (g) A private property owner shall not be held liable for any damage to a cemetery on their  
38 property when that damage is caused by individuals conducting familial or social visitations to the  
39 cemetery: *Provided*, That this limitation on liability shall not apply if the person conducting the  
40 visitation is an agent of the private property owner. Individuals conducting familial and social  
41 visitations to a cemetery contemplated by this section are liable for any damage they cause.

The Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Delegates hereby certify that the foregoing bill is correctly enrolled.

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*Clerk of the Senate*

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*Clerk of the House of Delegates*

Originated in the Senate.

In effect 90 days from passage.

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*President of the Senate*

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*Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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The within is ..... this the.....  
Day of ....., 2025.

.....  
*Governor*