

Public Policy Position
SB 549

The Animal Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 244 members. The Animal Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan and the position expressed herein is that of the Animal Law Section only and not the State Bar of Michigan. To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this item.

The Animal Law Section has a public policy decision-making body with 15 members. On March 11, 2022, the Section adopted its position after an electronic discussion and vote. 13 members voted in favor of the Section's position, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 2 members did not vote.

Support

Explanation:

The Animal Law Section supports SB 549, which would create a new act regulating pet cemeteries and pet crematoriums. We recommend that the title of the bill be amended to the “pet cemetery AND PET CREMATORIUM regulation act.”

The pet cemetery and crematorium industry is currently unregulated by the state. The need for statewide regulation in this arena was demonstrated by the abrupt closure of a pet cemetery in Livingston County, Michigan in fall 2018. Pet owners who had spent hundreds or thousands of dollars to bury their pets were informed that the property, which had been leased, was being sold, leaving its future as a pet cemetery uncertain. They were given a short window of time to retrieve their pets' remains. This traumatized the pet owners and resulted in a lawsuit. This industry, which relies on the strong bond people have with their pets, should be regulated to ensure that no one takes advantage of that bond.

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