

**Criteria For The Certification of
Historical Significance of Abandoned
Cemeteries Under the Provisions**

OF

**HOUSE BILL NO. 780
Laws of Mississippi, 1971**

- I. The request for a certificate of historical significance must pertain to an "abandoned" cemetery.
 - A. For the purposes of the implementation of this act, an "abandoned" cemetery shall be construed to be one that is not adequately maintained by its legal owner or owners, whether religious bodies, private individuals, or governmental agencies.
 - B. There must be no objection to this certification if the cemetery is privately owned by a religious body or a private individual.
 - C. An "abandoned" cemetery shall also be interpreted as one in which no burials have been made in the fifty years preceding the date of the official, written request to the Board of Trustees of the Department of Archives and History for a certificate of historical significance with no future planned burials to be made in the cemetery.
 - D. A single grave, in some instance, may constitute an "abandoned" cemetery.
 - E. Indian burial grounds shall be regarded as "abandoned" cemeteries.

- II. In determining whether or not to issue a certificate of historical significance, the Board of Trustees will consider:
- A. Cemeteries which contain the graves of persons who have contributed significantly to the history of the nation, the state, or the local region.
 - B. Cemeteries which are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the nation, the state, or the local region.
 - C. Cemeteries which are associated with properties entered on the National Register of Historic Places.
 - D. Cemeteries which are associated with "Mississippi Landmarks," as provided for in the Antiquities Law of the State of Mississippi.
 - E. Cemeteries which are located on land belonging to the State of Mississippi, to a county or municipality, or to any political subdivision of the State.
 - F. Cemeteries containing the graves of veterans of any of the nation's wars.
 - G. Cemeteries containing statuary, vaults, markers, and monuments of sufficient architectural and artistic value to merit their protection and preservation.
 - H. Cemeteries which, by their preservation, would contribute in turn to the preservation of the earlier historical image of a locality.
 - I. Cemeteries containing 18th century burials.
 - J. Indian burial grounds, officially identified by professional archaeologists.

III. Those cemeteries which have been officially certified by the Board of Trustees shall be inventoried by local persons or groups requesting the certificate, and the inventory shall be deposited with the Department of Archives and History. This procedure will not be necessary if the Department already has the records for that particular cemetery in its collections.