

Testimony for the House Republican Policy Committee
Suburban Memorial Garden Cemetery

Vickie and Terry Snyder

September 5, 2018

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the House Republican Policy Committee. This is our story. Our name is Vickie & Terry Snyder. On August the 5th 2015 our son, Thomas Glenn Snyder, was killed in a motorcycle accident.

We ended up having three lots given to us down at Suburban Memorial Gardens Cemetery. We went and met with Theodore Martin and we chose the three lots that we wanted, which are on the far left side of the cemetery, where the headstones can be placed.

That all went fine, paying for the opening and the closing of our sons' site - no issues. Two weeks later we met with Theodore Martin, again. We wanted to pick out the headstone for our son. We all – my two daughters included - sat down and picked out a headstone with a motorcycle and the saying that we wanted on the headstone.

The bill came to a little over \$6,000. Theodore Martin said if we wrote him out a check for \$6,000 he would accept that.

Knowing that we desperately wanted this to happen as soon as possible because we needed a place to go and mourn for our son, and so many friends needed a place to go and mourn for our son, we wrote him out the check and all was well.

We checked on the check and in less than four days the check had been cashed, still no problem. We were told it would take three months tops, which we were glad about because that meant right before the holidays.

Four months went by. At that point we made a phone call to the cemetery owners and didn't hear anything back until early January. We stopped down to ask what was going on the one

day and the person behind the desk took our name and number and said that she would have them call us. That very afternoon Northern Regional Police Department called us, and they asked us if we had unfinished business with the Martin's. We said "yes, of course" and they proceeded to ask us what that was. We told them we paid \$6,000 for a headstone and we had not gotten it yet. They then informed us that the Martin's were deeply involved in fraudulent activity and more than likely, very quite possibly, they had cashed our check and we would not receive our goods.

How did our life get to this point? Good Lord! It was bad enough that our son was killed and taken from us and now we were being told that at the lowest point in our entire lives, these people took advantage of us and stole \$6,000 from us! When was our nightmare going to end? Well We've come to realize that this nightmare will never end because a parent never ever stops grieving for the loss of their child.

What these two people did was the lowest of the lowest! They took advantage of people when they were at their lowest point, grieving the loss of a loved one, and suffering! Taking advantage of that moment in someone's life and stealing money from them is something that cannot be swept under the carpet or go without punishment.

We had no choice but to go to Bachman Memorials and order another headstone, paying another \$6,200. In less than six weeks' time our son had a headstone, a place where all that loved him could go and mourn.

AND NOW... the cemetery is abandoned. There's nobody to take care of it, nobody in charge, nobody is running the cemetery. It has been abandoned!!! So many of us have taken it upon ourselves to go down there and spend hours every week to mow where our loved ones have

been laid to rest. We keep a journal of the hours we spend down there mowing and trimming. We log the gas that we spend, every time, every week. We continue do care for the cemetery very faithfully and we won't stop. Our son is laid to rest there. That's the least that we can do. That's why we do it!!

We have been waiting for three years now for somebody to hear our story and praying that someone might be able to help get this mess straightened out. We are grateful for what you are trying to do and hope our story adequately describes the urgency there is in creating legislation to protect other Pennsylvanian's from experiencing this same situation. Thank you so much for what you are trying to do.