

First Regular Session
Sixty-sixth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 07-0329.01 Richard Sweetman

HOUSE BILL 07-1003

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Roberts,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

(None),

House Committees
Judiciary

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING THE COLORADO PROBATE CODE, AND, IN CONNECTION
102 THEREWITH, CLARIFYING THE PROCEDURE BY WHICH BANK
103 PERSONNEL MAY OPEN A DECEDENT'S SAFE DEPOSIT BOX TO
104 DETERMINE WHETHER A WILL IS INSIDE, AUTHORIZING A
105 CUSTODIAN OF AN ACCOUNT CREATED UNDER THE COLORADO
106 UNIFORM TRANSFERS TO MINORS ACT TO TRANSFER ACCOUNT
107 ASSETS TO A QUALIFIED MINOR'S TRUST, AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC
108 ADMINISTRATOR TO PETITION A COURT FOR APPOINTMENT TO
109 ACT AS A CONSERVATOR TO PROTECT THE ASSETS OF A MISSING
110 PERSON, AND AUTHORIZING A COURT TO APPOINT A SPECIAL
111 ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF AN
112 ESTATE.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Clarifies the procedure by which bank personnel may open a deceased person's safe deposit box to determine whether the decedent's will is located inside. Authorizes a custodian of an account created under the "Colorado Uniform Transfers to Minors Act" to transfer account assets to a qualified minor's trust. Authorizes a public administrator to petition a court for appointment to act as a conservator to protect the assets of a missing person when no other person has acted to do so. Authorizes a district court or the probate court, on its own motion, to formally appoint a special administrator when a special administrator is needed for the proper administration of an estate.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** 15-10-111, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended
3 to read:

4 **15-10-111. Entry into safe deposit box of decedent -**
5 **definitions.** (1) Whenever a decedent at the time of his OR HER death
6 was a SOLE OR JOINT lessee ~~or owner~~ of a safe deposit box, the custodian
7 shall, prior to notice that a personal representative or special administrator
8 has been appointed, allow access to the box by:

9 (a) A successor of the decedent, if such decedent was the sole
10 lessee ~~or owner~~ of the box, upon presentation of an affidavit made
11 pursuant to section 15-12-1201 for the purpose of delivering the contents
12 of the box in accordance with said section; ~~and an official of the~~
13 ~~custodian or, if the custodian is an individual, the custodian or his~~
14 ~~attorney-in-fact shall be present during such entry solely to determine if~~
15 ~~the box contains an instrument purporting to be the will of the decedent;~~

1 or

2 (b) A person who is reasonably believed to be an heir at law or
3 devisee of the decedent, A PERSON NOMINATED AS A PERSONAL
4 REPRESENTATIVE PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 15-12-203 (1)
5 (a), or the agent or attorney of such person for the purpose of determining
6 whether the box contains AN INSTRUMENT THAT APPEARS TO BE a will of
7 the decedent, deed to a burial plot, or burial instructions. ~~Such entry shall~~
8 ~~be made in the presence of an official of the custodian or, if the custodian~~
9 ~~is an individual, in the presence of the custodian or his attorney-in-fact.~~

10 (c) IF A PERSON DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (a) OR (b) OF THIS
11 SUBSECTION (1) DESIRES ACCESS TO A SAFE DEPOSIT BOX BUT DOES NOT
12 POSSESS A KEY TO THE BOX, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL DRILL THE SAFE
13 DEPOSIT BOX AT THE PERSON'S EXPENSE. THE CUSTODIAN SHALL RETAIN,
14 IN A SECURE LOCATION AT THE PERSON'S EXPENSE, THE CONTENTS OF THE
15 BOX OTHER THAN THE PURPORTED WILL, DEED TO A BURIAL PLOT, OR
16 BURIAL INSTRUCTIONS. THE EXPENSES SHALL BE CONSIDERED AN ESTATE
17 ADMINISTRATION EXPENSE.

18 (d) A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CUSTODIAN SHALL BE PRESENT
19 DURING THE ENTRY OF A SAFE DEPOSIT BOX PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

20 (e) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION AFFECTS THE RIGHTS AND
21 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR, AS DESCRIBED IN
22 SECTIONS 15-12-620 AND 15-12-621.

23 (1.5) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
24 REQUIRES:

25 (a) "CUSTODIAN" MEANS A BANK, SAVINGS AND LOAN
26 ASSOCIATION, OR OTHER INSTITUTION ACTING AS A LESSOR OF A SAFE
27 DEPOSIT BOX, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 11-46-101, C.R.S., OR SECTION

1 11-101-401, C.R.S.

2 (b) "REPRESENTATIVE OF A CUSTODIAN" MEANS AN AUTHORIZED
3 OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE OF A CUSTODIAN.

4 (2) ~~If an instrument purporting to be a will of the decedent is~~
5 ~~found in a safe deposit box as the result of an entry pursuant to subsection~~
6 ~~(1) of this section, the purported will shall be removed therefrom by the~~
7 ~~custodian or the representative of the custodian, and by him shall be~~
8 ~~mailed by registered or certified mail or delivered in person to the clerk~~
9 ~~of the district or probate court of the county wherein the decedent was~~
10 ~~resident. If there is doubt as to the county of residence of such decedent,~~
11 ~~the purported will shall be lodged in the office of the clerk of the proper~~
12 ~~court of the county wherein the safe deposit box is located. If the safe~~
13 ~~deposit box contains a deed to a burial plot or burial instructions not a~~
14 ~~part of a purported will, such instruments may be removed by the~~
15 ~~presumed successor, heir at law, or devisee, or the agent or attorney of~~
16 ~~any such person.~~

17 (a) THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CUSTODIAN MAY COPY THE WILL
18 AT THE EXPENSE OF THE PERSON OR PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO HAVE
19 ACCESS TO THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION
20 (1) OF THIS SECTION AND MAY DELIVER THE COPY OF THE WILL TO THE
21 PERSON OR TO THE PERSON'S AGENT OR ATTORNEY. IN COPYING THE WILL,
22 THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CUSTODIAN SHALL NOT REMOVE ANY
23 STAPLES OR OTHER FASTENING DEVICES OR DISASSEMBLE THE WILL IN ANY
24 WAY.

25 (b) THE CUSTODIAN SHALL MAIL THE WILL BY REGISTERED OR
26 CERTIFIED MAIL OR DELIVER THE WILL IN PERSON TO THE CLERK OF THE
27 DISTRICT OR PROBATE COURT OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE DECEDENT

1 WAS A RESIDENT. IF THE CUSTODIAN IS UNABLE TO DETERMINE THE
2 COUNTY OF RESIDENCE OF THE DECEDENT, THE CUSTODIAN SHALL MAIL
3 THE WILL BY REGISTERED OR CERTIFIED MAIL OR DELIVER THE WILL IN
4 PERSON TO THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PROPER COURT OF THE
5 COUNTY IN WHICH THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX IS LOCATED.

6 (c) IF THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX CONTAINS A DEED TO A BURIAL PLOT
7 OR BURIAL INSTRUCTIONS THAT ARE NOT A PART OF A PURPORTED WILL,
8 THE PERSON OR PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAFE
9 DEPOSIT BOX UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION
10 MAY REMOVE THESE INSTRUMENTS.

11 (3) After the appointment of a personal representative or special
12 administrator for the decedent, the personal representative or special
13 administrator shall be permitted to enter the safe deposit box upon the
14 same terms and conditions as the decedent was permitted to enter during
15 his OR HER lifetime.

16 (4) If at the time of the decedent's death one or more other persons
17 were legally permitted to enter the safe deposit box, their permission to
18 enter shall continue, notwithstanding the death of the decedent.

19 (5) A CUSTODIAN SHALL NOT BE LIABLE FOR ANY CLAIMS BASED
20 ON ACTIONS TAKEN IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS
21 SECTION.

22 **SECTION 2.** 11-50-102, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended
23 BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

24 **11-50-102. Definitions.** As used in this article, unless the context
25 otherwise requires:

26 (13.5) "QUALIFIED MINOR'S TRUST" MEANS A TRUST, INCLUDING A
27 TRUST CREATED BY A CUSTODIAN, OF WHICH A MINOR IS THE SOLE

1 CURRENT BENEFICIARY AND THAT SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS OF
2 SECTION 2503 (c) OF THE FEDERAL "INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986"
3 AND THE REGULATIONS IMPLEMENTING THAT SECTION.

4 **SECTION 3.** 11-50-114, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended
5 BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

6 **11-50-114. Powers of custodian.** (1.5) AT ANY TIME, A
7 CUSTODIAN MAY TRANSFER PART OR ALL OF A CUSTODIAL PROPERTY TO
8 A QUALIFIED MINOR'S TRUST WITHOUT A COURT ORDER. SUCH A TRANSFER
9 TERMINATES THE CUSTODIANSHIP TO THE EXTENT OF THE TRANSFER.

10 **SECTION 4.** 15-12-622, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended
11 BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION to read:

12 **15-12-622. Public administrator - acting as conservator or**
13 **trustee.** (4) **Missing persons.** A PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR HAS STANDING
14 TO PETITION A COURT OF APPROPRIATE JURISDICTION FOR HIS OR HER
15 APPOINTMENT TO ACT AS A CONSERVATOR, TEMPORARY CONSERVATOR,
16 OR SPECIAL CONSERVATOR TO PROTECT A PERSON'S ASSETS AND MANAGE
17 THE PERSON'S ESTATE IF:

18 (a) THE PERSON IS MISSING, DETAINED, OR UNABLE TO RETURN TO
19 THE UNITED STATES; AND

20 (b) NO INTERESTED PERSON HAS INITIATED PROTECTIVE
21 PROCEEDINGS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS PURPOSE.

22 **SECTION 5.** 15-12-614 (1) (b), Colorado Revised Statutes, is
23 amended to read:

24 **15-12-614. Special administrator - appointment.** (1) A special
25 administrator may be appointed:

26 (b) In a formal proceeding by order of the court on the petition of
27 any interested person, OR BY THE COURT ON THE COURT'S OWN MOTION,

1 and finding, after notice and hearing, that appointment is necessary to
2 preserve the estate or to secure its proper administration including its
3 administration in circumstances where a general personal representative
4 cannot or should not act. If it appears to the court that an emergency
5 exists, appointment may be ordered without notice.

6 **SECTION 6. Effective date.** This act shall take effect July 1,
7 2007.

8 **SECTION 7. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
9 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
10 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.