

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1269

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Ways & Means, April 3, 1997

**Title:** An act relating to death investigations.

**Brief Description:** Providing moneys for the death investigations' account.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Robertson, Costa, Scott, Tokuda, Delvin and L. Thomas.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Ways & Means: 4/3/97 [DP].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators West, Chair; Deccio, Vice Chair; Strannigan, Vice Chair; Bauer, Brown, Fraser, Hochstatter, Kohl, Long, Loveland, McDonald, Schow, Sheldon, Snyder, Spanel, Swecker, Thibaudeau and Winsley.

**Staff:** Bryon Moore (786-7726)

**Background:** In 1983, the Legislature established the death investigations' account to fund various activities associated with death investigations. Specifically, the account funds the state Toxicology Laboratory, the state Forensic Investigations Council, and other activities such as reimbursing counties for the cost of autopsies.

The account receives its funding from part of the fees received for copies of death certificates. The Department of Health charges \$11 for the first certified copy of birth, death, marriage, divorce, annulment, or legal separation records, and \$6 for additional copies ordered at the same time as the first copy.

Of the fee received for copies of death certificates, local registrars pay all but \$3 to the jurisdictional health department and turn \$3 over to the State Treasurer to be held in the death investigations' account.

**Summary of Bill:** The fee for copies of vital records and the amount turned over to the death investigations' account from death certificate fees are changed. The Department of Health charges \$13 for the first certified copy of birth, death, marriage, annulment, or legal separation records, and \$8 for additional copies ordered at the same time as the first copy.

Of the fee received for copies of death certificates, local registrars pay all but \$5 to the jurisdictional health department and turn \$5 over to the State Treasurer to be held in the death investigations' account.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** The fee increase is critical to adequately fund death investigations in the state. The fee increase is needed to continue the Forensic Investigations Council's efforts at training and ensuring appropriate standards are adhered to statewide. The death investigation account has been responsibly managed, and the additional funding provided by the bill will be managed in the same manner.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Annette Sandberg, Chief, Washington State Patrol; Donald Reay, Forensic Investigations Council; Barry Logan, State Toxicologist; Martha Reed, Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners.