
Appropriations Committee

HB 1794

Brief Description: Concerning the death investigations account.

Sponsors: Representatives Klippert and Jinkins.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Authorizes the Forensic Investigations Council to spend from the Death Investigations Account in order to fund a statewide case management system for coroners and medical examiners.

Hearing Date: 2/9/17

Staff: Rachelle Harris (786-7137).

Background:

Death Investigations Account.

The Death Investigations Account (DIA) is an appropriated account that funds various activities related to investigations of deaths in the state. The account is funded with revenues from a fee charged by the Department of Health (DOH) and local registrars for providing certified copies of various records such as birth and death certificates, marriage and divorce records, etc. Moneys in the account are appropriated to the following:

- the Toxicology Laboratory;
- counties for the cost of performing autopsies;
- the Washington State Patrol (WSP) for the state dental identification system;
- the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) for training county coroners, medical examiners, and their staff; and
- the Forensic Investigations Council (FIC).

Forensic Investigations Council.

The FIC is a 13-member council responsible for oversight of the Bureau of Forensic Laboratory Services (Bureau). The council's members are selected from a variety of county, city, and state

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officials and are appointed by the Governor. In addition to other duties, the FIC is permitted to authorize various expenditures from the DIA, including the following:

- Up to \$250,000 per biennium for assisting local jurisdictions in the investigation of multiple deaths involving unanticipated or extraordinary events, or involving multiple jurisdictions; and
- Up to \$25,000 per biennium for assisting local jurisdictions in securing forensic anthropology services or other testing in order to identify human remains.

Summary of Bill:

The FIC may authorize expenditures from the DIA for the purpose of funding a statewide case management system for coroners and medical examiners.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.