

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 1269

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**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.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

**Staff:** David Bowman (786-7291); Edie Adams (786-7180).

**Background:** In 1983, the Legislature established the death investigations' account to fund various activities associated with death investigations. The state treasurer makes disbursements from the death investigations' account to the following:

- (1) state forensic investigations council;
- (2) state toxicology laboratory;
- (3) counties for the cost of autopsies;
- (4) University of Washington to fund the state forensic pathology fellowship program;
- (5) State Patrol for providing partial funding for the state dental identification system;
- (6) Criminal Justice Training Commission for training county coroners; and
- (7) medical examiners and their staff.

The death investigations' account has received funding from part of the fees received for copies of vital records. (RCW 70.58.107) The Department of Health (DOH) charges \$11 for the first certified copy of birth, death, marriage, divorce, annulment, or legal separation records. The DOH charges \$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.

The amount turned over to the death investigations' account from the fee for copies of death certificates has been increased by \$1 since 1987. The state forensic investigations council estimates a shortfall in the death investigations' account for the current biennium.

**Summary of Bill:** The fee for copies of vital records and the amount turned over to the death investigations' account are changed. The Department of Health (DOH)

charges \$13 for the first certified copy of birth, death, marriage, divorce, annulment, or legal separation records. The DOH charges \$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.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested February 6, 1997.

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

Office of Program Research