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SENATE BILL 5256

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Padden and Baumgartner

Read first time 01/24/13. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1 AN ACT Relating to reports and records of autopsies and  
2 postmortems; amending RCW 68.50.105; and providing an effective date.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 68.50.105 and 2011 c 61 s 1 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 Reports and records of autopsies or postmortems shall be  
7 confidential, except that the following persons may examine and obtain  
8 copies of any such report or record: The personal representative of  
9 the decedent as defined in RCW 11.02.005, any family member, the  
10 attending physician or advanced registered nurse practitioner, the  
11 prosecuting attorney or law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction,  
12 public health officials, the department of labor and industries in  
13 cases in which it has an interest under RCW 68.50.103, or the secretary  
14 of the department of social and health services or his or her designee  
15 in cases being reviewed under RCW 74.13.640. The reports or records of  
16 autopsies or postmortems are not confidential in any case in which a  
17 death occurs in a penitentiary, correctional institution, lockup, or  
18 prison, or while the decedent was detained, in actual custody, or

1 contacted by a law enforcement officer during the performance of his or  
2 her duties.

3 The coroner, the medical examiner, or the attending physician  
4 shall, upon request, meet with the family of the decedent to discuss  
5 the findings of the autopsy or postmortem. For the purposes of this  
6 section, the term "family" means the surviving spouse, state registered  
7 domestic partner, or any child, parent, grandparent, grandchild,  
8 brother, or sister of the decedent, or any person who was guardian of  
9 the decedent at the time of death.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act takes effect January 1, 2014.

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