

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1678
By: Raymond
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that it is unreasonably difficult for a family to access certain autopsy records and that next of kin or a legal representative of the deceased should not have to seek a subpoena to access an autopsy photograph or x-ray of the deceased. H.B. 1678 seeks to address this issue by subjecting a photograph or x-ray of a body taken during an autopsy that is excepted from required public disclosure to disclosure to the next of kin or legal representative of the deceased, subject to a discretionary exception under public information law.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1678 amends the Code of Criminal Procedure to subject a photograph or x-ray of a body taken during an autopsy that is excepted from required public disclosure in accordance with state public information law to disclosure to the next of kin or legal representative of the deceased, subject to a discretionary exception under state public information law.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.