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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Several religious groups, including members of the Jewish faith, oppose autopsy for religious reasons; and

WHEREAS, Several states have adopted laws that protect those sincerely held religious beliefs and forbid autopsies over the religious objection of the decedent's family or friends except in cases of compelling public necessity; and

WHEREAS, The Illinois Coroners and Medical Examiners Association has voluntarily decided to adopt a protocol that outlines how they shall ensure religious and cultural sensitivity for the deceased and their families that includes the following:

(1) If the coroner or medical examiner has reason to believe that such action would be contrary to the religious beliefs of the decedent, dissection or autopsy shall not be performed, nor a collection off toxicology samples drawn;

(2) In cases of presumed or actual objection and the coroner or medical examiner concludes that the autopsy is a compelling public necessity, the coroner or medical examiner shall wait 48 hours before performing the autopsy; During this period the coroner or medical examiner shall exercise due diligence to contact the deceased person's relatives;

1 (3) In cases of compelling public necessity, the
2 autopsy shall be performed in the least intrusive manner
3 possible respecting religious traditions, and all blood,
4 organs, parts, and tissues shall be released as soon as
5 possible to the person who has custody of the body for
6 burial;

7 (4) After an inquest, the coroner shall make reasonable
8 effort to deliver any tissue samples, blood, organs, or
9 other parts of the decedent that were removed to the person
10 responsible for the burial of the decedent as soon as is
11 practicable; The person responsible for the burial shall
12 remain in contact with the coroner or medical examiner
13 performing the inquest in order to ensure that this occurs;

14 (5) In cases where a coroner or medical examiner
15 determines that an infant died of Sudden Infant Death
16 Syndrome, the coroner or medical examiner shall not take
17 tissue samples for research purposes if the parents object
18 on grounds that such procedure conflicts with their
19 religious beliefs; and

20 (6) A presentation by Agudath Israel on religious
21 sensitivity to death and autopsy in Judaism shall be
22 incorporated into the continuing education classes of the
23 Illinois Coroners and Medical Examiners employees;
24 therefore, be it

25 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
2 the House of Representatives commends the efforts of the
3 Illinois Coroners and Medical Examiners Association to respect
4 the religious and cultural beliefs of the citizens of the State
5 of Illinois; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution shall be sent to
7 the Illinois Coroners and Medical Examiners Association.