

By: Representative Hood

To: Public Health and Human Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 653

1 AN ACT TO CREATE NEW SECTION 41-37-27, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
 2 1972, TO BE KNOWN AS "JENNA'S LAW," TO REQUIRE ALL AUTOPSIES  
 3 CONDUCTED IN THIS STATE TO INCLUDE AN INQUIRY TO DETERMINE WHETHER  
 4 THE DEATH WAS A DIRECT RESULT OF A SEIZURE OR EPILEPSY; TO PROVIDE  
 5 THAT IF THE FINDINGS IN AN AUTOPSY ARE CONSISTENT WITH KNOWN OR  
 6 SUSPECTED SUDDEN UNEXPECTED DEATH IN EPILEPSY (SUDEP), THEN THE  
 7 MEDICAL EXAMINER, EXAMINING PHYSICIAN OR CORONER MUST CAUSE TO BE  
 8 INDICATED ON THE DEATH CERTIFICATE THAT SUDEP IS THE CAUSE OR  
 9 SUSPECTED CAUSE OF DEATH AND FORWARD A COPY OF THE DEATH  
 10 CERTIFICATE TO THE NORTH AMERICAN SUDEP REGISTRY WITHIN THIRTY  
 11 DAYS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

13 **SECTION 1.** The following shall be codified as Section  
 14 41-37-27, Mississippi Code of 1972:

15 41-37-27. (1) This section shall be known as "Jenna's Law."

16 (2) For the purposes of this section, the term "sudden  
 17 unexpected death in epilepsy" means a death in a patient  
 18 previously diagnosed with epilepsy which is not due to trauma,  
 19 drowning, status epilepticus or other known causes, but for which  
 20 there is often evidence of an associated seizure. A finding of  
 21 sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) is definite when  
 22 clinical criteria are met and an autopsy reveals no alternative



23 cause of death, such as stroke, myocardial infarction or drug  
24 intoxication, although there may be evidence of a seizure.

25 (3) All autopsies conducted in this state must include an  
26 inquiry to determine whether the death was a direct result of a  
27 seizure or epilepsy. If the findings in an autopsy of a medical  
28 examiner, examining physician or coroner are consistent with known  
29 or suspected sudden unexpected death in epilepsy, then the medical  
30 examiner, examining physician or coroner must:

31 (a) Cause to be indicated on the death certificate that  
32 SUDEP is the cause or suspected cause of death; and

33 (b) Forward a copy of the death certificate to the  
34 North American SUDEP Registry at the Langone Medical Center at New  
35 York University within thirty (30) days.

36 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
37 and after July 1, 2023.

