

Assembly Bill No. 57–Committee
on Government Affairs

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to coroners; requiring coroners to make a reasonable effort to notify the next of kin who is authorized to order the burial or cremation of a decedent of the decedent’s death; authorizing a coroner to notify certain other persons of the death of the decedent; authorizing a coroner to provide a coroner’s report to such persons; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

Existing law requires a coroner to notify the next of kin of a decedent of the decedent’s death. (NRS 259.045) Existing law also establishes the order of priority of persons authorized to order the burial or cremation of the human remains of a deceased person. (NRS 451.024) **Section 3** of this bill requires a coroner to make a reasonable effort to notify the next of kin who is authorized to order the burial or cremation of the human remains of a decedent of the death of the decedent. **Section 3** also authorizes a coroner to notify the parents, guardians, adult children or custodians of the decedent of the decedent’s death and provide a copy of the report of the coroner to the parents, guardians, adult children or custodians, as applicable. **Sections 1 and 2** of this bill make conforming changes. This bill is known as “Veronica’s Law” after Veronica Caldwell.

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 244.163 is hereby amended to read as follows:

244.163 1. The boards of county commissioners in their respective counties may create by ordinance the office of the county coroner, prescribe the qualifications and duties of the county coroner and make appointments to the office.

2. Any coroner so appointed is governed by the ordinances pertaining to such office which may be enacted by the board of county commissioners, and the provisions of NRS 259.025 , *259.045* and 259.150 to 259.180, inclusive.

3. The boards of county commissioners shall require that the county coroner *make a reasonable effort to* notify a decedent’s next of kin *who is authorized to order the burial or cremation of the human remains of the decedent pursuant to NRS 451.024 of the fact of the decedent’s death* without unreasonable delay.

4. For any offense relating to the violation or willful disregard of such duties or trusts of office as may be specified by the



respective boards of county commissioners, all coroners holding office by appointment pursuant to this section are subject to such fines and criminal penalties, including misdemeanor penalties and removal from office by indictment, accusation or otherwise, as the ordinance prescribes. This subsection applies to all deputies, agents, employees and other persons employed by or exercising the powers and functions of the coroner.

Sec. 2. NRS 259.010 is hereby amended to read as follows:

259.010 1. Every county in this State constitutes a coroner's district, except a county where a coroner is appointed pursuant to the provisions of NRS 244.163.

2. The provisions of this chapter, except NRS 259.025 , **259.045** and 259.150 to 259.180, inclusive, do not apply to any county where a coroner is appointed pursuant to the provisions of NRS 244.163.

Sec. 3. NRS 259.045 is hereby amended to read as follows:

259.045 1. The coroner shall *make a reasonable effort* to notify a decedent's next of kin *who is authorized to order the burial or cremation of the human remains of the decedent pursuant to NRS 451.024* of the fact of *the* decedent's death without unreasonable delay.

2. *The coroner may notify the parents, guardians, adult children or custodians of a decedent of the fact of the decedent's death and provide a copy of the report of the coroner to the parents, guardians, adult children or custodians regardless of whether they are the next of kin authorized to order the burial or cremation of the human remains of the decedent pursuant to NRS 451.024.*

3. *As used in this section, "custodian" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 432B.060.*

Sec. 4. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2017.

