MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2021

By: Representative Hood

To: Public Health and Human Services

HOUSE BILL NO. 412

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2021.