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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 297 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY EVANKOVICH, COHEN, KNOWLES, READSHAW, DAVIS,  
WATSON, TOPPER, A. HARRIS, DEASY, MCGINNIS, MILLARD, GRELL,  
SAYLOR, O'NEILL, MURT, GABLER AND ROEBUCK, FEBRUARY 2, 2015

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, FEBRUARY 2, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Providing for release of information by coroners and medical  
2 examiners.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Release of  
7 Coroner and Medical Examiner Information Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "County." A county of this Commonwealth, including a county  
13 within which is located a city of the first class or with which  
14 a city of the first class is coextensive.

15 Section 3. Investigation information.

16 (a) General rule.--Except as provided in subsection (b), the  
17 following apply to public release of information by a coroner or

1 medical examiner:

2 (1) Following an investigation by a coroner or medical  
3 examiner to determine the cause of any death in this  
4 Commonwealth, the coroner or medical examiner shall not  
5 release to the public the name of the deceased and the cause  
6 and manner of death unless the release is in accordance with  
7 the requirements under paragraph (2).

8 (2) Release of the information under paragraph (1) may  
9 not occur until either notification of the next of kin of the  
10 deceased individual is confirmed or 72 hours have elapsed  
11 following the determination of the identity of the deceased  
12 individual and the cause and manner of the death, whichever  
13 occurs first.

14 (b) Exception.--This section shall not apply in cases of a  
15 public health emergency as determined by the coroner or medical  
16 examiner.

17 Section 4. Applicability.

18 This act shall apply in each county of this Commonwealth.

19 Section 5. Effective date.

20 This act shall take effect in 60 days.