**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND ARTICLE 7, CHAPTER 5, TITLE 17 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO DUTIES OF CORONERS AND MEDICAL EXAMINERS, BY ADDING SECTION 17-5-615, TO PROVIDE THAT UPON THE DEATH OF A PERSON IN HIS HOME, OWNERSHIP OF UNUSED SCHEDULE II, III, IV, OR V CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES PRESCRIBED TO THE DECEDENT SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE CORONER’S OFFICE FOR INVESTIGATION OF THE CAUSE OF DEATH, TO PROVIDE THAT EACH CORONER’S OFFICE SHALL ESTABLISH A WRITTEN POLICY, AND TO PROVIDE THAT LAW ENFORCEMENT SHALL COOPERATE WITH THE CORONER’S OFFICE IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Article 7, Chapter 5, Title 17 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 17-5-615. (A) Upon the death of a person in his home, ownership of unused Schedule II, III, IV, or V controlled substances prescribed to the decedent shall be transferred to the coroner’s office for investigation of the cause of death.

(B) Each coroner’s office shall establish a written procedure to ensure safe collection, storage, and disposal of unused controlled substances collected pursuant to this section. Disposal shall occur within a reasonable time following the conclusion of the coroner’s investigation. The coroner’s office shall create a record of the name and quantity of each unused controlled substance upon receipt. The coroner’s office shall dispose of the unused controlled substances by complying with Environmental Protection Agency and Drug Enforcement Administration guidelines for safe disposal or immediate mail-back to a collector registered pursuant to 21 C.F.R. Section 1317.40.

(C) This section does not apply to an unused controlled substance collected as part of a law enforcement investigation.

(D) Law enforcement shall cooperate with the coroner’s office in order to achieve the purposes of this section.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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