

Original sponsors: Adams, Taylor
and Koponen

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

2

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 345 (HESS)

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to coroners' inquests."

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 * Section 1. AS 12.65.020 is amended to read:

9 Sec. 12.65.020. DUTIES. (a) When a person dies unattended by a
10 physician, or when no physician is prepared to execute the certificate
11 of death prescribed by AS 18.50 (Vital Statistics Act) [THE VITAL
12 STATISTICS ACT], the coroner assigned to serve the place where the
13 death occurs may, by written order, direct a medical examiner to view
14 the remains of the deceased person and to perform the post mortem
15 examination, including an autopsy, necessary to make a proper deter-
16 mination of the cause of death and to execute the prescribed death
17 certificate. When the medical examiner has completed [UPON THE COM-
18 PLETION OF] the examination, the examiner shall, without delay, submit
19 a report of the findings and conclusions to the coroner.

20 (b) The coroner may [SHALL] order an inquest under this chapter
21 if the findings and conclusions of the medical examiner, together with
22 other information available to the coroner, warrant the inquest.
23 Otherwise the coroner shall enter an order dispensing with the inquest
24 and shall record the certificate of death as prescribed by law.

25 * Sec. 2. AS 12.65.040 is repealed and reenacted to read:

26 Sec. 12.65.040. INQUIRY INTO CAUSE OF DEATH. (a) When in-
27 formed that a person has been killed by another or has died under cir-
28 cumstances that afford a reasonable ground to suspect that the death
29 is the result of a crime or suicide, the coroner may inquire under

1 AS 12.65.050 - 12.65.090 into the cause and manner of death.

2 (b) In deciding whether to conduct an inquest, the coroner shall
3 make a preliminary examination or direct a peace officer to conduct
4 the examination and report findings. On the basis of the preliminary
5 examination, the coroner shall determine whether an inquest is war-
6 ranted and, if warranted, conduct the inquest.

7 (c) This section does not apply if the death will be inquired
8 into by a grand jury.