

1 HOUSE BILL NO. 213

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10

11 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NONVIABLE BIRTH;

12 ESTABLISHING REQUIREMENTS FOR REQUESTING AND ISSUING A CERTIFICATE; PROVIDING

13 RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; PROVIDING A DEFINITION; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 50-15-101 AND 50-

14 15-403, MCA."

15

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

17

18 **NEW SECTION. Section 1. Certificate of nonviable birth -- requirements.** (1) The department

19 shall establish a certificate of nonviable birth on a form adopted by the department and meeting the

20 requirements of subsection (4). On request by a parent, a certificate of nonviable birth must be filed in addition

21 to the fetal death certificate provided for in 50-15-403 and must be provided to the parent.

22 (2) In the instance of a nonviable birth, the person authorized to register a fetal death shall advise

23 a parent:

- 24 (a) of the manner in which a request for a certificate of nonviable birth may be made;
- 25 (b) that the parent must request the certificate within 2 weeks of the nonviable birth; and
- 26 (c) (i) that the original certificate of nonviable birth is available as a public record; and
- 27 (ii) that the parentage, marital status of the parent, cause of death of the fetus, and any medical
- 28 information will not be included as a public record.

- 1 (3) A request for a certificate of nonviable birth must:
- 2 (a) be made within 2 weeks of the birth on a form prescribed by the department by rule; and
- 3 (b) include the date of the nonviable birth and the county in which the birth occurred.
- 4 (4) The certificate of nonviable birth prepared by the department must contain:
- 5 (a) the date of the nonviable birth;
- 6 (b) the county in which the birth occurred;
- 7 (c) the name of the fetus, as provided on the fetal death certificate pursuant to 50-15-403. If a
- 8 name does not appear on the original or amended fetal death certificate and the requesting parent does not
- 9 wish to provide a name, the department shall fill in the certificate with the name "baby boy", "baby girl", or, if the
- 10 sex of the child is unknown, "baby" and the last name of the parent as provided in 50-15-221.
- 11 (5) The following statement must appear on the front of the certificate: "This certificate is not proof
- 12 of a live birth".
- 13 (6) A certificate of nonviable birth is a public record, and a copy of the original certificate is
- 14 available as a public record. The parentage, marital status of the parent, cause of death of the fetus, and any
- 15 medical information may not be included as part of the public record.
- 16 (7) It is a final agency action, not subject to review under the Montana Administrative Procedure
- 17 Act, for the department to refuse to issue a certificate of nonviable birth to a person who is not a parent named
- 18 on the fetal death certificate.
- 19 (8) The department may not use a certificate of nonviable birth to calculate live birth statistics.
- 20 (9) This section may not be used to establish, bring, or support a civil cause of action seeking
- 21 damages against any person or entity for bodily injury, personal injury, or wrongful death for a nonviable birth.
- 22 (10) The department shall adopt rules as to the form, content, and process for the certificate of
- 23 nonviable birth.

24

25 **Section 2.** Section 50-15-101, MCA, is amended to read:

26 **"50-15-101. Definitions.** Unless the context requires otherwise, in parts 1 through 4 the following

27 definitions apply:

28 (1) "Advanced practice registered nurse" means an individual who has been certified as an

1 advanced practice registered nurse as provided in 37-8-202.

2 (2) "Authorized representative" means a person:

3 (a) designated by an individual, in a notarized written document, to have access to the individual's  
4 vital records;

5 (b) who has a general power of attorney for an individual; or

6 (c) appointed by a court to manage the personal or financial affairs of an individual.

7 (3) "Dead body" means a human body or parts of a human body from which it reasonably may be  
8 concluded that death occurred.

9 (4) "Department" means the department of public health and human services provided for in 2-15-  
10 2201.

11 (5) "Dissolution of marriage" means a marriage terminated pursuant to Title 40, chapter 4, part 1.

12 (6) "Fetal death" means death of the fetus prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its  
13 mother as a product of conception, notwithstanding the duration of pregnancy. The death is indicated by the  
14 fact that after expulsion or extraction, the fetus does not breathe or show any other evidence of life, such as  
15 beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles. Heartbeats are  
16 distinguished from transient cardiac contractions. Respirations are distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts  
17 or gasps.

18 (7) "Final disposition" means the burial, interment, cremation, removal from the state, or other  
19 authorized disposition of a dead body or fetus.

20 (8) "Invalid marriage" means a marriage decreed by a district court to be invalid for the reasons  
21 contained in 40-1-402.

22 (9) "Live birth" means the complete expulsion or extraction from the mother as a product of  
23 conception, notwithstanding the duration of pregnancy. The birth is indicated by the fact that after expulsion or  
24 extraction, the child breathes or shows any other evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the  
25 umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles. Heartbeats are distinguished from transient cardiac  
26 contractions. Respirations are distinguished from fleeting respiratory efforts or gasps.

27 (10) "Local registrar" means a person appointed by the department to act as its agent in  
28 administering this chapter in the area set forth in the letter of appointment.

1           (11) "Nonviable birth" means an unintentional, spontaneous fetal demise occurring after a heartbeat  
2 is detected but prior to the 20th week of gestation of a pregnancy that has been verified by a health care  
3 provider.

4           (14)(12) "Person in charge of disposition of a dead body" means a person who places or causes a  
5 dead body or the ashes after cremation to be placed in a grave, vault, urn, or other receptacle or otherwise  
6 disposes of the body or fetus and who is a funeral director, an employee acting for a funeral director, or a  
7 person who first assumes custody of a dead body or fetus.

8           (12)(13) "Physician" means a person legally authorized to practice medicine in this state.

9           (13)(14) "Registration" means the process by which vital records are completed, filed, and incorporated  
10 into the official records of the department.

11           (14)(15) "Research" means a systematic investigation designed primarily to develop or contribute to  
12 generalizable knowledge.

13           (15)(16) (a) "Stillbirth" means a fetal death occurring after a minimum of 20 weeks of gestation.

14           (b) The term does not include an abortion, as defined in 50-20-104.

15           (16)(17) "System of vital statistics" means the registration, collection, preservation, amendment, and  
16 certification of vital records. The term includes the collection of reports required by this chapter and related  
17 activities, including the tabulation, analysis, publication, and dissemination of vital statistics.

18           (17)(18) "Vital records" means certificates or reports of birth, death, fetal death, marriage, and  
19 dissolution of marriage and related reports.

20           (18)(19) "Vital statistics" means the data derived from certificates or reports of birth, death, fetal death,  
21 induced termination of pregnancy, marriage, and dissolution of marriage and related reports."

22

23           **Section 3.** Section 50-15-403, MCA, is amended to read:

24           **"50-15-403. Preparation and filing of death or fetal death certificate.** (1) A person in charge of  
25 disposition of a dead body or fetus ~~that weighs at least 350 grams at death or, if the weight is unknown, has~~  
26 ~~reached 20 completed weeks of gestation at death~~ when the fetal death resulted from an unintentional,  
27 spontaneous occurrence after a heartbeat was detected shall obtain, from the persons best qualified to supply  
28 it, personal data on the deceased, including the deceased's social security number, if any, or, in the case of a

1 fetal death, information on the parents that is required by the department ~~from persons best qualified to supply~~  
2 ~~the data and enter it.~~ The information must be entered on the death or fetal death certificate.

3 (2) The person in charge of disposition of the dead body or fetus shall present the death certificate  
4 to the certifying physician, the certifying advanced practice registered nurse, or the coroner having jurisdiction  
5 for medical certification of the cause of death. The medical certification must be completed by the physician, the  
6 advanced practice registered nurse, or the coroner within the timeframe established by the department by rule.

7 The person in charge of disposition shall obtain the completed certification of the cause of death from the  
8 physician, the advanced practice registered nurse, or the coroner and shall, within the time that the department  
9 may prescribe by rule, file the death or fetal death certificate with the local registrar in the registration area  
10 where the death occurred or, if the place of death is unknown, where the dead body was discovered.

11 (3) If a dead body is found in this state but the place of death is unknown, the place where the  
12 body is found must be shown as the place of death on the death certificate. If the date of death is unknown,  
13 then the approximate date must be entered on the certificate. If the date cannot be approximated, the date that  
14 the body was found must be entered as the date of death, and the certificate must indicate that fact.

15 (4) When a death occurs in a moving vehicle, as defined in 45-2-101, in the United States and the  
16 body is first removed from the vehicle in this state, the death must be registered in this state and the place  
17 where the body is first removed is considered the place of death. When a death occurs in a moving vehicle  
18 while in international air space or in a foreign country or its air space and the body is first removed from the  
19 vehicle in this state, the death must be registered in this state, but the actual place of death, insofar as it can be  
20 determined, must be entered on the death certificate."

21  
22 NEW SECTION. Section 4. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
23 integral part of Title 50, chapter 15, part 2, and the provisions of Title 50, chapter 15, part 2, apply to [section 1].

24 - END -