

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER
11 Shuttle Rd., Farmington, CT 06032-1939
Telephone: (860) 679-3980 Fax: (860) 679-1257



April 4, 2007

TO: Senator Andrew McDonald, Representative Michael Lawlor, Co-Chairs and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: H. Wayne Carver II, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner

RE: Senate Bill 844 - An Act Concerning Missing Persons and the Duties of the
Chief Medical Examiner, and
House Bill 5273 - An Act Concerning Law Enforcement and Missing Persons

I appreciate the opportunity to give my input on these two related Bills.

Both bills contain a large section detailing the responsibilities of the Chief Medical Examiner in cases of missing persons. I am pleased to report that these are almost entirely the actions, which we currently take. But I welcome the opportunity to have this codified and especially the general tenor of the Bill that a central authority coordinates these activities. I am especially pleased that the Act forbids the cremation of an unidentified human being. This has been my policy for twenty years, but it was not the policy of one of my predecessors.

Senate Bill 844 contains a separate section concerning the release of material for genetic testing for the purposes of paternity examinations and for the identification of potential life threatening natural diseases. This would codify the right of the next of kin to authorize release of this material and would grant the courts authority to order such release.

I very much strongly support this section becoming law. Currently almost all the material we provide for genetic testing is done for the purposes of proving paternity and specifically so that the minor child is granted rights to the biological father's social security survivor benefits.

The section on using this material to identify life threatening genetic disorders in living individuals is not a current problem, but this section was included upon my recommendation anticipating that genetic sciences will inevitably face this problem in the near future.

I anticipate that this Bill will have no financial impact on our agency. I do anticipate that providing clear-cut guidelines it will avoid confusion, which inevitably means avoiding administrative overhead.