



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Janelle Rettig, Chairperson
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November 2, 2017

William R. Peterson, Executive Director
Iowa State Association of Counties:
5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Dear Mr. Peterson:

The Johnson County Board of Supervisors supports the request from the Iowa Office of the State Medical Examiner (IOSME) to increase the autopsy fee, as approved by the House Administrative Rules and Reviews Committee, from \$1,400 to \$1,900. This fee increase is essential to address the state's autopsy backlog, and would provide a short-term fix to financially support the IOSME until the Iowa State Legislature provides adequate funding to return the IOSME forensic pathologist staff to the prior level of four. Our responsibility to the public requires us to adequately fund public services, including those centered on public health and public safety.

We support the autopsy requirements and recommendations for deaths as currently listed in Iowa Administrative Code 641-127.3(1). These autopsy requirements and recommendations are not arbitrary. The required and recommended autopsies guide all Iowa county medical examiners in their work to ensure a baseline of quality investigative and medical information for families of decedents, public health agencies, law enforcement agencies, and the Iowa criminal justice system.

Until the Iowa State Legislature can adequately fund the IOSME, a stop gap is needed to continue to provide high quality service to the citizens of Iowa. The Johnson County Board of Supervisors believes an increase in the autopsy fee is essential to maintain the level of service the citizens of Iowa expect and deserve.

Sincerely,

Janelle Rettig, Chairperson
Johnson County Board of Supervisors