



TO: Michigan House Senior Health, Security & Retirement Committee

FROM: Andrew Farmer, Associate State Director
Health & Supportive Services

RE: AARP Michigan Position of Support for HB 4013 & Revision

DATE: March 25, 2009

We appreciate the work on this proposal and support the concept on behalf of our 1.5 million state Association membership on most of the language as drafted.

We question only why the appearance of a two-tiered notification protocol, with the placing party and the County Medical Examiner being alerted "as soon as possible" versus the next of kin/guardian and physician being alerted "immediately."

AARP believes "as soon as possible," is too vague and, as a practical matter, unnecessary. Plus, if we understand one of the intents of the legislation, it seems the Medical Examiner should be making his or her own professional determinations about how soon they need to be present to assess whether a given event needs to be declared a crime scene – especially before the evidentiary trail can "cool" any or worse, have more time to be tampered with.

As a practical matter, and, as a matter of limiting potential opportunities by anyone to obstruct justice, we'd say simply that all parties listed in both licensed settings should be notified "immediately." If policymakers wish to set an order of sequence for these parties receiving immediate notification we would find that acceptable, since if carried out that way all would still be immediately notified, with far fewer worries on interpretation of how fast that is accomplished. The new provision is not satisfied until all have been notified, within minutes of each other.

Thank you for this proposal and we hope to see it swiftly progress into Michigan law with these changes.