

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2001

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HOUSE BILL 1362

Short Title: Advance Health Care Directives Registry. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Fox; Alexander, Barbee, Barefoot, Brubaker, Church, Cole, Culp, Dedmon, Esposito, Haire, Hunter, McLawhorn, Michaux, Oldham, Owens, Preston, Rogers, Saunders, Smith, Teague, Tolson, and G. Wilson.

Referred to: Health, if favorable, Finance.

April 23, 2001

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A CENTRAL REGISTRY FOR ADVANCE HEALTH  
3 CARE DIRECTIVES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a  
6 new Article to read:

7 "Article 21.

8 "Advance Health Care Directive Registry.

9 "**§ 130A-465. Advance Health Care Directive Registry establishment.**

10 The Secretary of State shall establish and maintain a statewide, on-line, central  
11 registry in which an individual who has executed an advance health care directive or a  
12 revocation of an advance health care directive may file that document. The registry shall  
13 be accessible over the Internet through a site maintained by the Secretary of State.

14 "**§ 130A-466. Filing requirements.**

15 (a) The following documents, and revocations of these documents, may be filed  
16 with the registry:

17 (1) A health care power of attorney under Article 3 of Chapter 32A of the  
18 General Statutes.

19 (2) A declaration of a desire for a natural death under Article 23 of  
20 Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.

21 (3) An advance instruction for mental health treatment under Part 2 of  
22 Article 3 of Chapter 122C of the General Statutes.

23 (4) A declaration of an anatomical gift under Part 3 of Article 16 of  
24 Chapter 130A of the General Statutes.

1       **(b) The document and any revocation of a document filed with the registry shall**  
2 **be notarized regardless of whether notarization is required for its validity.**

3       **(c) The document may be submitted only by the individual who executed the**  
4 **document.**

5       **(d) The individual who submits the document shall supply a return address.**

6       **(e) The document shall be accompanied by any fee required by this Article.**

7 **"§ 130A-467. Validity of unregistered documents.**

8       **Failure to register a document with the registry maintained by the Secretary of State**  
9 **pursuant to this Article does not affect the validity of the document. Failure to notify the**  
10 **Secretary of State of the revocation of a document filed with the registry does not affect**  
11 **the validity of a revocation that meets the statutory requirements for the revocation to be**  
12 **valid.**

13 **"§ 130A-468. Filing of documents with the registry.**

14       **(a) When the Secretary of State receives a document that may be filed with the**  
15 **registry pursuant to this Article, the Secretary shall produce a digital reproduction of**  
16 **that document and enter that reproduction into the registry database. The Secretary is**  
17 **not required to review a document to ensure that it complies with the particular statutory**  
18 **requirements applicable to the document. Each document entered into the registry**  
19 **database shall be assigned a unique file number and password.**

20       **(b) Upon entering the reproduction of the document into the registry database,**  
21 **the Secretary shall return the original document and a wallet-size card containing the**  
22 **document's file number and password to the individual who submitted the document.**

23       **(c) When the Secretary of State receives a revocation of a document that is filed**  
24 **with the registry along with that document's file number and password, the Secretary**  
25 **shall delete that document from the registry database.**

26       **(d) The Secretary of State's entry of a document into the registry database does**  
27 **not do any of the following:**

28               **(1) Affect the validity of the document in whole or in part.**

29               **(2) Relate to the accuracy of information contained in the document.**

30               **(3) Create a presumption regarding the validity of the document, regarding**  
31 **the accuracy of information contained in the document, or that the**  
32 **statutory requirements for the document have been met.**

33 **"§ 130A-469. Disclosure of information contained in the registry.**

34       **The registry shall be accessible only via the Internet. A document filed in the**  
35 **registry shall be accessible only if the individual attempting to access the document**  
36 **enters both the file number and password of the document. Documents filed in the**  
37 **registry, file numbers, passwords, and any other information maintained by the**  
38 **Secretary of State under this Article shall not be subject to disclosure pursuant to**  
39 **Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.**

40 **"§ 130A-470. Fees for using the registry; other funds for the registry.**

41       **(a) The Secretary of State shall charge a fee of ten dollars (\$10.00) for filing a**  
42 **document, other than a revocation, with the registry. There is no fee for filing a**  
43 **revocation with the registry. The fee shall be applied to the maintenance of the registry**  
44 **and to the promotion of public education and awareness of the registry.**

1       **(b)** The Secretary of State, on behalf of the State, may accept gifts, donations,  
2 bequests, and other forms of voluntary contributions; may apply for grants from public  
3 and private sources; and may expend funds received under this subsection for the  
4 purpose of promoting public education and awareness of the registry.

5       **(c)** All fees, funds, and gifts received pursuant to this section are subject to audit  
6 by the Department of State Auditor and shall be expended in conformity with Article 1  
7 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes. The balance of any fees, funds, and gifts held by  
8 the Secretary of State pursuant to this section at the end of each fiscal year shall not  
9 revert to the General Fund.

10 **§ 130A-471. Limitation of liability.**

11 The Secretary of State and any agent or person employed by the Secretary of State  
12 shall be held harmless from any liability in any action brought by or on behalf of any  
13 person injured or harmed by the administration of this Article."

14       **SECTION 2.** G.S. 132-1.2 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

15       **"(3)** Reveals a document, file number, password, or any other information  
16 maintained by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 21 of Chapter  
17 130A of the General Statutes."

18       **SECTION 3.** G.S. 32A-24(a) reads as rewritten:

19       **"(a)** Any physician or other health care provider involved in the medical care of  
20 the principal may rely upon the authority of the health care agent contained in a signed  
21 and acknowledged health care power of attorney in the absence of actual knowledge of  
22 revocation of the health care power of attorney. The physician or health care provider  
23 may rely upon a copy of the health care power of attorney obtained from the Advance  
24 Health Care Directive Registry maintained by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article  
25 21 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes to the same extent that the individual may  
26 rely upon the original document."

27       **SECTION 4.** G.S. 90-321(c) reads as rewritten:

28       **"(c)** The attending physician may rely upon a signed, witnessed, dated and proved  
29 ~~declaration:~~declaration, or a copy of that declaration obtained from the Advance Health  
30 Care Directive Registry maintained by the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 21 of  
31 Chapter 130A of the General Statutes:

32       (1) Which expresses a desire of the declarant that extraordinary means or  
33 artificial nutrition or hydration not be used to prolong his life if his  
34 condition is determined to be terminal and incurable, or if the declarant  
35 is diagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state; and

36       (2) Which states that the declarant is aware that the declaration authorizes  
37 a physician to withhold or discontinue the extraordinary means or  
38 artificial nutrition or hydration; and

39       (3) Which has been signed by the declarant in the presence of two  
40 witnesses who believe the declarant to be of sound mind and who state  
41 that they (i) are not related within the third degree to the declarant or to  
42 the declarant's spouse, (ii) do not know or have a reasonable  
43 expectation that they would be entitled to any portion of the estate of  
44 the declarant upon his death under any will of the declarant or codicil

1           thereto then existing or under the Intestate Succession Act as it then  
2           provides, (iii) are not the attending physician, or an employee of the  
3           attending physician, or an employee of a health facility in which the  
4           declarant is a patient, or an employee of a nursing home or any  
5           group-care home in which the declarant resides, and (iv) do not have a  
6           claim against any portion of the estate of the declarant at the time of  
7           the declaration; and

- 8           (4)   Which has been proved before a clerk or assistant clerk of superior  
9           court, or a notary public who certifies substantially as set out in  
10          subsection (d) below."

11          **SECTION 5.** G.S. 122C-74 reads as rewritten:

12          "(b)   The attending physician or other mental health treatment provider may  
13          consider valid and rely upon an advance ~~instruction~~-instruction, or a copy of that  
14          advance instruction that is obtained from the Advance Health Care Directive Registry  
15          maintained by the Secretary State pursuant to Article 21 of Chapter 130A of the General  
16          Statutes, in the absence of actual knowledge of its revocation or invalidity."

17          **SECTION 6.** G.S. 130A-409(c) reads as rewritten:

18          "(c)   A person who acts with due care in accord with the terms of this Part or the  
19          anatomical gift laws of another state is not liable for damages in any civil action or  
20          subject to prosecution in any criminal proceeding for the act. A person may rely upon a  
21          document registered with the Advance Health Care Directive Registry maintained by  
22          the Secretary of State pursuant to Article 21 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes to  
23          the same extent as the person can rely upon the original of that document."

24          **SECTION 7.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2001.