

As Introduced

**132nd General Assembly
Regular Session
2017-2018**

S. B. No. 83

**Senator Williams
Cosponsor: Senator Thomas**

A BILL

To enact section 109.021 of the Revised Code to
establish the duties and authority of the
Attorney General to investigate and prosecute
cases relating to the death of a person caused
by a peace officer.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 109.021 of the Revised Code be
enacted to read as follows:

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Sec. 109.021. (A) As used in this section:

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(1) "Detention" has the same meaning as in section 2921.01
of the Revised Code.

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(2) "Peace officer" has the same meaning as in section
109.71 of the Revised Code.

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(3) "Prosecutor" means the county prosecuting attorney,
city director of law, village solicitor, or similar chief legal
officer, who has the authority to prosecute a criminal case in
the court in which the case is filed.

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(B) (1) The attorney general shall investigate the death of

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an unarmed person caused by a peace officer engaged in the 18
officer's duties, regardless of whether the person was in 19
detention at the time of the action that resulted in the 20
person's death. If the attorney general believes that there is a 21
significant question as to whether a person, whose death was 22
caused by a peace officer, was armed and dangerous at the time 23
of the action that resulted in the person's death, the attorney 24
general may investigate the death of a person pursuant to this 25
section. 26

(2) The attorney general shall conduct a full, reasoned, 27
and independent investigation, including all of the following: 28

(a) Gathering and analyzing evidence; 29

(b) Conducting witness interviews; 30

(c) Reviewing investigative reports, scientific evidence, 31
and audio and video recording. 32

(3) The attorney general shall have exclusive supervision 33
and control of all investigations conducted under this section. 34
In conducting an investigation, the attorney general and any 35
assistant attorney general or special counsel designated by the 36
attorney general has all rights, privileges, powers, and duties 37
of a prosecutor, including the power to issue subpoenas and 38
subpoenas duces tecum, to compel the attendance of witnesses, 39
and to compel the production of records and papers of all kinds 40
and descriptions that are relevant to the investigation. Upon 41
the failure of any person to comply with any subpoena or 42
subpoena duces tecum issued under this section, the attorney 43
general, assistant attorney general, or special counsel may 44
apply to the court of common pleas of Franklin county or of any 45
county in which an element of the crime occurred for a contempt 46

order.

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(C) When it appears to the attorney general, as a result
of an investigation under division (B) of this section, that a
prosecution should be commenced, the attorney general shall
refer the evidence to a grand jury under sections 2939.01 to
2939.24 of the Revised Code or to a special grand jury under
section 2939.17 of the Revised Code. The attorney general and
any assistant attorney general or special counsel designated by
the attorney general may appear at any time before the grand
jury to give information relative to a legal matter or to advise
upon a legal matter when required. The attorney general and any
assistant attorney general or special counsel designated by the
attorney general shall have and may exercise all rights,
privileges, and powers of a prosecutor in such cases.

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(D) If an indictment is returned by a grand jury pursuant
to a referral made under division (C) of this section, the
attorney general has sole responsibility to prosecute the case.
When prosecuting a case under this section, the attorney general
and any assistant attorney general or special counsel designated
by the attorney general has all rights, privileges, duties, and
powers of a prosecutor.

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(E) The attorney general's authority to conduct an
investigation under division (B) (1) of this section and to
prosecute related crimes supersedes the authority of any other
prosecutor to investigate the death in these circumstances and
to prosecute related crimes. A prosecutor shall have only those
powers and duties designated by the attorney general.

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(F) (1) The attorney general shall provide a report to the
governor or the governor's designee if either of the following
applies:

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<u>(a) The attorney general declines to refer evidence to a</u>	77
<u>grand jury regarding a death investigated under this section.</u>	78
<u>(b) A grand jury declines to return an indictment on</u>	79
<u>evidence referred to the grand jury under this section.</u>	80
<u>(2) A report required under division (F)(1) of this</u>	81
<u>section shall include, to the extent possible and lawful, an</u>	82
<u>explanation of the outcome of the investigation and any</u>	83
<u>resulting recommendations for systemic reform.</u>	84