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## Frisco lawmaker files first bill in response to serial murder spree tied by police to Billy Chemirmir

HB 723 would require officials to notify next of kin if a death certificate is amended by local medical examiners.



As the next Texas legislative session draws near in Austin, several bills are in the works to address issues of concern to senior living communities in response to the Billy Chemirmir case. (Ashley Landis / Staff Photographer)

By [Charles Scudder](#)  
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A Frisco lawmaker has submitted the state’s first bill in response to a yearslong string of murders at Dallas-area senior living facilities. It’s the first major step toward systemic change that families of many of the victims have been working to secure after learning of how their loved ones died.

Billy Chemirmir, 47, has been **indicted on capital murder charges in the smothering deaths of 14 elderly women in Dallas and Collin counties**, and has been linked to at least nine other deaths in civil suits. Families didn’t learn the true cause of death of their loved ones until years after, when Chemirmir was arrested in 2018.



Jared Patterson (Courtesy)

This week, state Rep. Jared Patterson, R-Frisco, filed HB 723, which would require officials to notify next of kin when a death certificate is amended.

Such a circumstance is rare. Earlier this year, Collin County Medical Examiner William Rohr said that until the

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Chemirmir case, he'd never before had to change a cause of death from heart attack to homicide.

Yet many families who say their loved ones were killed by Chemirmir were left in the dark. Some, like Frisco's Cheryl Bixler Pangburn, learned through social media rather than a call from an official.



**CRIME**

**Police didn't tell her they believed Billy Chemirmir killed her mom in 2017. She learned on Facebook**

BY CHARLES SCUDDER

Her mother died at a senior living facility in September 2017. But it wasn't until a year and a half later that a friend of Pangburn's saw the 90-year-old's name on a list of potential victims and reached out to her on Facebook. Pangburn then called police, who confirmed that they suspected her mother had been murdered, and that her death certificate had already been amended to "undetermined."

Patterson's bill would ensure people such as Pangburn get a call from officials first.

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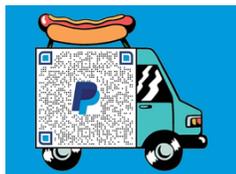


Billy Chemirmir (Dallas County Jail / Dallas County Jail)

“It’s a very personal thing to the families involved,” Pangburn said. “It should be brought to the family’s attention if something that significant happens.”

Pangburn and Patterson are

neighbors, and Pangburn said he drafted the legislation without her knowledge after **hearing about her story.**



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BY  PayPal

“I can’t imagine going through what they’ve gone through and not being notified,” Patterson said. “If the ME changes the death certificate for any reason, the next of kin should be notified.”



Cheryl Pangburn holds a photo of her and her mother, Marilyn Bixler — taken at luxury senior living community Parkview in Frisco — at Pangburn's home in Frisco. (Lynda M. González / Staff Photographer)

## Other bills expected

Patterson's bill is the first of several pieces of legislation related to Chemirmir's alleged killing spree that are expected to be considered in the upcoming session, which opens Jan. 12.

A group of families have formed a nonprofit to lobby legislators on matters related to senior security. The group, **Secure Our Seniors Safety**, says Dallas-area lawmakers are drafting three other bills addressing such issues, although none has been formally introduced yet.

The first bill would create a certification

program for security standards at senior living facilities, including employee background checks and IDs for all visitors. In civil lawsuits, the families say Chemirmir was allowed access to Dallas' posh senior living facilities because of a failure to secure the properties.



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BY DANA BRANHAM

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Another bill would ban forced arbitration clauses in senior living facility leases. Similar clauses in some leases have hampered the ability of some families to sue senior living facilities.

A third bill would require shops that buy and sell jewelry to keep records of what is sold and by whom, as well as require regular inspections. Police say Chemirmir sold jewelry he stole from his victims at pawn shops but tracking where he sold pieces and in what quantity has been difficult.

“It’s such a profoundly emotional experience to have your parent killed, and it’s so easily preventable,” said state Sen. Nathan Johnson, D-Dallas, who is working to draft the bills. “There should be an expectation of safety when your mom or your dad or yourself checks in to a senior living facility.”



POLITICS

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BY ALEX BRISENO

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Chemirmir, who faces the death penalty if convicted, says he is innocent. **A Kenyan immigrant with permanent resident status in the U.S.**, he is in the Dallas County jail in lieu of \$11.6 million bail.

Although his trial is scheduled for April 2021, his lawyer has said **it will likely be delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic.**

# Timeline of the Billy Chemirmir case

Follow the trail of alleged victims and how law enforcement pieced together the case with this timeline. This timeline will be updated as more information becomes available.



Taylor Johnston and Charles Scudder / DMN



TEXT



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