



American Academy of Forensic Sciences
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CFSO RECOGNIZES THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES REPORT TENTH ANNIVERSARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2019

The Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations celebrates the tenth anniversary of the publication of the National Academy of Sciences Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward. In (2006) the CFSO requested Congress to conduct a study to assess the needs of the forensic science community. As a result, the National Academy of Sciences was tasked with conducting the study and reporting the results, which were released in February of 2009.

"We believe the 2009 report provided us significant support to advance forensic science in both the operations of the nation's forensic science laboratories and medical examiner/coroner offices, as well as support for forensic science research. The report has provided a roadmap for the Federal government to ensure we have an increased level of resources for the accreditation of laboratories, certification of forensic practitioners, training, robust research, and capacity building. While many advancements have been made, there is still more work to be done," said Matthew Gamette, Chair of the CFSO.

As the report marks its tenth anniversary, a report from the Department of Justice to Congress regarding the operational needs of laboratories is imminent. In the Justice for All Act of 2016, Congress tasked the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) with examining the status of current workload, backlog, personnel, and equipment needs of public crime laboratories and medical examiner/ coroner offices. The Attorney General will be considering the recommendations of previous DOJ studies on forensic science, and the National Academy of Sciences report as part of this assessment.

Gamette stated, *"it is our hope that this most recent study will highlight in more detail the specific resources that are needed to increase capacity in forensic science service provider laboratories, while maintaining the quality and reliability of their results. Since the publication of the NAS report, the use of forensic science has increased, the science has advanced, and new technologies, such as the Rapid DNA Instrument, have been introduced. Importantly, most full-service, publicly funded laboratories are accredited, and an increased number of practitioners are certified. We must actively encourage and participate in forensic science research, find ways to implement standards and best practices in the laboratory, and further develop ways to publish good research, policy, and methods to the forensic science community. The current opioid crisis, backlogs in sexual assault kits, and the serious shortage of medical examiners have highlighted the critical needs for more resources throughout the entire forensic science community. CFSO looks forward to working with all stakeholders to address these needs."*

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