



**CONSORTIUM OF FORENSIC SCIENCE
ORGANIZATIONS (CFSO)**

FLASH BRIEF

AUTUMN 2016/WINTER 2017

The mission of the CFSO is to speak with a single forensic science voice in matters of mutual interest to its member organizations, to influence public policy at the national level, and to make a compelling case for greater federal funding for public crime laboratories and medical examiner offices. The primary focus of the CFSO is local, state, and national policymakers, as well as the United States Congress.

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FEDERAL LEGISLATION UPDATE

A Year in a Glance...2016

2016 was an active year for Forensic Science on Capitol Hill and lawmakers have indicated to CFSO that they plan to continue working to advance legislation that will assist the forensic science community. Please find below a look at what was accomplished in 2016 and what to expect in 2017.

S. 2577, JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION OF 2016

On December 16, 2016 the Justice for All Reauthorization bill became law. Following a two-plus-year effort in the United States and then fiscal policy challenges in the House, the Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2016 was signed into law at the end of the year.

The Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations is pleased to announce that we were able to ensure that the new law includes numerous sections in support of forensic science providers such as increased spending levels and additional purpose areas for which the funding can be used. This legislation is an authorizing bill, which provides legal power for programs to exist and operate. Funding will still need to be appropriated during the appropriations process but the levels in our key grant programs are raised. We could not have achieved this without the unwavering support of Senator Cornyn (R-TX) and Senator Leahy (D-VT) along with their staff, who worked tirelessly to negotiate the provisions of this bill among all parties concerned and then worked with the House leadership and the House Judiciary Committee, who were also extremely supportive of our community, to push it over the finish line. An interesting

statistic that puts this accomplishment in context-only 2% of bills introduced in the 114th Congress were signed into law (approx. 221 out of 11,412). Attached in the links below is more detailed information:

[S 2577 Bill Text](#)

[Read more about this bill in the CFSO PowerPoint posted on the CFSO website](#)

[Press Release by former Vice-President Joe Biden](#)

[Senator Leahy Press Release on Senate Passage](#)

[Senator Leahy Press Release on Bill Signing](#)

[Senator Cornyn Press Release](#)

H.R. 5578, SURVIVOR'S BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2016

On October 7, 2016, President Obama signed into law this legislation. This legislation includes the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act and the Sexual Assault Survivors' Rights Act. The CFSO worked with staff on the provisions of this legislation that address the notification process to the victim regarding the status of evidence as well as the timing of the destruction of the kit. It provides for certain rights to victims such as the right to not pay for a sexual assault exam, provides grants to States, and creates a working group which includes the forensic community as stakeholders. This effort also led to positive relationships being built with Senator Shaheen (NH) and we continue to work with her staff on a number of other issues and potential legislation. Please click on the links below for a more detailed CFSO summary of the legislation.

[HR 5578 Bill Text](#)

[Senator Shaheen Press Release](#)

[Read more about this bill in the CFSO PowerPoint posted on the CFSO website](#)

H.R. 320, THE RAPID DNA ACT OF 2016

This legislation passed the Senate and was placed on the calendar for a vote in the House. There is no opposition to this bill but it got caught up in the time crunch to conclude the 114th Congress. This legislation directs the necessary standards and procedures to be set for the use of Rapid DNA instruments and the analyses and also amends the DNA Identification Act of 1994. The CFSO has been very active in pushing for the passage of this legislation to include advising the Congress on the necessary provisions needed to utilize the instrument. This bill has already been introduced in the House and Senate and has sponsors from both parties. Senator Hatch continues to be the key proponent on this bill and is working with us to see it through in this Congress. There have been other versions of this bill introduced in previous sessions and in this session and CFSO supports the Hatch version that we have worked on with him. We have provided testimony in Congress, support letters, and even a recent editorial. Please see attached documents from the CFSO:

[Current S 139 Bill Text](#)

[Salt Lake Tribune Op-Ed](#)

[Congressional Hearing with ASCLD President](#)

[CFSO Rapid DNA Support Letter 115th Congress](#)

[CFSO Rapid DNA Support Letter 114th Congress](#)

[Opposition to HR 320 approach to Rapid DNA](#)

S.3259/ H.R. 5795, FORENSIC SCIENCE AND STANDARDS ACT OF 2016

This is a reintroduction of the old Rockefeller Bill which seeks to promote the research and development of forensic science along with standards and protocols within the National Science Foundation, the National Institute for Standards and Technology and the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the White House. This legislation has not moved out of Committee and is generally opposed by the Majority Party and the Members of the Judiciary Committees. We have been working with the authors and will continue to do so as we support the OSAC structure and increased resources for research and development. This will be a priority in 2017.

[114th Congress Bill Text](#)

BEFORE ACT

The CFSO worked with Senator Wyden and others to address the issue of contextual bias. In the end, the CFSO and the coalition of Senators could not come to agreement on legislation. The legislation has not been moved forward. Please see the letter to the Judiciary Committee Chairman and Ranking Member regarding the draft legislation.

[CFSO Letter to Congress](#)

APPROPRIATIONS

Yet again the appropriations process became bogged down by the calendar and did not get passed before the beginning of the fiscal year. Rather, a continuing resolution was passed and will be in effect until April 28, 2017 at which time the Congress will either extend the CR or pass a budget. Stay tuned for updates on this matter as we monitor the situation and actively push for increased funding.

Looking to the future...2017

COMMITTEE STRUCTURES IN CONGRESS

With every election come changes in the Committee Structure. With great sadness and gratitude, we bid a farewell to our long-term champion Senator Patrick Leahy (VT) who will no longer be the Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. While Senator Leahy will remain on the Judiciary Committee, he will now be the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Committee. The CFSO would like to thank Senator Leahy for his many years of leadership on our issues and say that we look forward to working with him on our funding matters now, as well as, the policy issues surrounding forensic science.

Stay tuned for a detailed list of Members on Committees that are pertinent to forensic science to be printed by the CFSO.

VICTIM'S MEETING

At the end of 2016, the CFSO was honored to have participated in a meeting hosted by Senator Cornyn with the leaders of various victim's advocacy groups. Those groups represented were RAINN, End Sexual Violence, Rise Now, Joyful Heart Foundation, the National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Center for Victims of Crime, and the National Criminal Justice Association. The intent of the meeting was to determine areas of priority for the victim's groups and the forensic science community so that we can work together to advance the agenda of each organization jointly when

appropriate. We look forward to many more meetings to come and thank Senator Cornyn and his staff for hosting such an important meeting.

OSAC LANGUAGE

As indicated in the 2016 overview, legislation has been introduced and is expected to be reintroduced when the new Congress arrives that will address the OSAC and how to fund its operation as well as codify its existence. We will be working closely with Congress to advance the necessary language and funding amount to match the needs and language requirements of the forensic science community.

OFS LANGUAGE

As indicated at the AAFS annual meeting, CFSO is drafting potential legislation to set up an Office of Forensic Science at the Department of Justice. This legislation would provide forensic science a voice within the DOJ commensurate with its importance in the criminal justice system. The Office would address capacity building, international accreditation efforts, and provide a direct conduit to the Attorney General for forensic science agencies.

OFM LANGUAGE

CFSO recently started drafting potential legislation for an Office of Forensic Medicine to be placed at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This office would support medicolegal death investigation, help in sharing information critical to medical examiners, and provide research and other support for forensic medical practitioners. CFSO is very excited to start working on this critical legislation.

FUNDING

Again this year we will work to fund forensic science grants to the highest level of appropriations we can and we look forward to the assistance of our CFSO Members in contacting their Members of Congress. We have already been meeting with the Appropriations Committees, federal agencies, and federal budget entities.

OSTP/PCAST

On September 20th, 2016, PCAST released a report to the President entitled Forensic Science in Criminal Courts: Ensuring Scientific Validity of Feature-Comparison Methods. After the report was released, PCAST decided to issue a request for additional information (RFI). Some additional responses were provided and additional information was added to the index of the report, but the conclusions remained the same.

The final draft of the report as well as references and responses to solicitation questions are available on the PCAST website: [Click here for the report](#)

Responses to the report were published by groups in the CFSO membership, federal agencies, and the National District Attorney's Association. CFSO reached out to PCAST many times in the drafting process and provided information to the CFSO membership regarding the report. CFSO continues to provide information to the membership regarding the impact of this PCAST report in courts around the country. It is not clear if the PCAST will be continued in the new administration or how it would be staffed. CFSO will continue to monitor new developments.

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY SYMPOSIUM

The NIJ's Forensic Technology Center of Excellence hosted an event entitled Looking Ahead: The National Sexual Assault Policy Symposium was on September 8th-9th, 2016 in Washington, DC. This symposium brought interested parties together to focus on collaborating to find solutions to the complexities of investigating sexual assault cases and testing sexual assault evidence.

Attendees included members of law enforcement, forensic laboratories, medical professionals, legal professionals, victim's rights advocates, and survivors.

Presenters shared valuable experiences from across the country with the goal to support national policymakers and practitioners as they improve public health and safety. Over 500 attendees participated either onsite or online. CFSO participated heavily on the planning group and many CFSO members presented and moderated during the symposium. NIJ produced a promotional video with many CFSO members. The link to the video is below. The symposium presentations can be viewed and there is a wealth of information on this topic. Forwarding this information to state coalitions and other stakeholders on this issue is highly recommended.

The symposium can be viewed here:

[Symposium Presentations](#)

[Symposium Promotional Video](#)

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FORENSIC SCIENCE

The National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS) held its 11th meeting in Gaithersburg, Maryland in September 12th and 13th 2016 and its 12th meeting in Washington, DC on January 9th and 10th, 2017. CFSO representatives attended both meetings and visited with NCFS Commissioners and other stakeholders during the meeting. CFSO continues to advocate for forensic practitioners during the commission meetings and encourage the commission to deal with impacts (fiscal and otherwise) of recommendations of the NCFS. CFSO will be at the last scheduled meeting of the NCFS on April 10th and 11th 2017. Please review the documents up for review at the next NCFS meeting:

- 1) Views on Statistical Statements in Forensic Testimony
- 2) Views on Report and Case Record Contents.

To view and comment on these draft work products [click here](#).

Click here to review all [work products adopted by the NCFS](#).

Check the NCFS website for periodic updates of documents or register with federal register to receive notification.

ORGANIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC AREA COMMITTEES

The OSAC released its 2015-2016 Annual Report in September.

[NIST OSAC Annual Report](#)

The report documents OSAC's activities and accomplishments to include:

- Increased interdisciplinary forensic science discussions;
- Work on 155 draft standards and guidelines projects related to forensic science;
- Publication of major OSAC processes, and shared process documents with the public;
- Posted one standard to the OSAC Registry of Approved Standards.

Over 20 Research Needs have been listed on the OSAC website which span several subcommittees to include Dogs and Sensors, Anthropology, Biological Data and Interpretation, Disaster Victim Identification, Medicolegal Death Investigation, and Odontology.

The Forensic Science Standards Board (FSSB), which oversees the OSAC, held its quarterly meeting in September 2016 in Virginia. The FSSB considered a number of standards for the Registry of Approved Standards and reviewed and voted on 197 OSAC membership positions. In addition to these activities, the FSSB voted on several recommendations made in the OSAC Leadership Strategy Session to improve communication among the OSAC.

In-person meetings of the SACs took place in July 2016 and August 2016 in Arizona. Details of what was accomplished in these meetings are described in the September OSAC Newsletter:

[SAC meeting briefing](#)

For more details on the OSAC including information on how you can get involved, please check out the OSAC Website here: [OSAC Information](#)

Finally, during the AAFS meeting on February 13-14, 2017 in New Orleans, the OSAC held a live webcast regarding their public status reports. Thirty OSAC Subcommittee and Scientific Area Committee (SAC) chairs, covering each forensic science discipline, described each unit's latest projects, task groups, research needs, and planned outcomes—as well as provide status updates on specific standards or guidelines. Information for this briefing was provided courtesy of NIST.

MEMBERS CORNER

American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)



The AAFS held their 69th annual scientific meeting from February 13th to 18th, 2017 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The meeting was entitled: Our Future Reflects Our Past: The Evolution of Forensic Science. The meeting proved to be a success with many wonderful presentations. Our well wishes to outgoing President John Gerns on a speedy recovery from a medical condition that prevented him from attending the annual meeting. Betty Lane Desportes was elected President and Sue Ballou was elected President-elect.

American Board of Forensic Toxicology/Society of Forensic Toxicologists



ABFT and ANAB Form Strategic Alliance

The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) and the ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) formed a strategic alliance in October 2016 whereby ANAB will administer the ABFT accreditation program on behalf of the ABFT.

While the ABFT laboratory accreditation program will be unchanged, all forensic toxicology laboratories accredited by the ABFT or seeking ABFT accreditation will now have an avenue to become accredited to ANAB's forensic testing program based on ISO/IEC 17025, the international standard for testing laboratories. Each laboratory accredited by ANAB and ASCLD/LAB will have the opportunity to add the ABFT Laboratory Accreditation Standard to its scope of accreditation.

Under the ABFT-ANAB alliance, ABFT laboratory inspectors will continue conduct inspections for ABFT's current laboratory accreditation program. ANAB will provide appropriate training to ABFT laboratory inspectors and ANAB-ASCLD/LAB toxicology assessors to conduct ANAB assessments that include the ABFT Laboratory Accreditation Standard.

The ABFT has had an accreditation program for forensic toxicology laboratories involved in postmortem toxicology and human performance testing for 19 years. It currently accredits 40 laboratories. ANAB-ASCLD/LAB has been accrediting forensic toxicology laboratories for more than 30 years. The ABFT-ANAB alliance will combine the resources of both programs to provide the highest quality accreditation services available in postmortem and human performance forensic toxicology.

The American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT) is a professional organization whose purpose is to establish and enhance voluntary standards for the practice of forensic toxicology and for the examination and recognition of scientists and laboratories providing forensic toxicology services. The ABFT was founded in 1975 to provide, in the interest of the public and the advancement of the sciences, a certification program in forensic toxicology. The ABFT currently certifies 393 forensic toxicologists. For more information, visit www.abft.org.

The ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Board (ANAB) provides accreditation for ISO/IEC 17025 forensic and non-forensic testing and calibration laboratories, ISO/IEC 17020 forensic and non-forensic inspection bodies and forensic inspection agencies, ISO Guide 34 reference material producers, ISO/IEC 17043 proficiency test providers, ISO 15189 medical test laboratories, ISO/IEC 17021 management systems certification bodies, and industry-specific programs. ANAB is a member of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), and is a signatory of the ILAC and IAF multilateral recognition arrangements. Through

these arrangements, ANAB cooperates with other accreditation bodies around the world to provide value to the organizations it has accredited and their clients, ensuring that accredited certificates and test results are recognized nationally and internationally. The global conformity assessment system ensures confidence and reduces risk for customers engaging in trade worldwide. For more information, visit www.anab.org.

American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD)



The International Committee of ASCLD has been very engaged with their international partners in the International Forensic Strategic Alliance (IFSA). ASCLD Past President Jody Wolf has served as the IFSA President since May 2015 and will continue this two-year term until the International Association of Forensic Sciences (IAFS) meeting to be held in 2017. President Wolf presided over the annual Board meeting in Lyon, France at the Interpol Forensic Managers Symposium from October 10-14, 2016.

IFSA has several ongoing initiatives including the Minimum Requirements Documents (MRDs). These documents provide guidance on the necessary quality system and technical infrastructure to seek accreditation and the minimum necessary systems needed to issue a quality forensic analysis across different scientific disciplines. There are currently two series of MRDs. Series 1 is comprised of Seized Drug Analysis, DNA, and Crime Scene Response. These were all authored in English and the goal is to now translate them into the five additional recognized languages of the United Nations. The translations were completed with the assistance of the Department of Defense except for Spanish. These translations must be verified for vernacular and accuracy. The current status of these verifications is provided below.

- Translation Verifications Pending
 - Russian (Complete)
 - Chinese (In Final Review)
 - French (In progress)
 - Arabic (Dubai Police Dept.)
 - Spanish (AICEF – waiting for input)

The second MRD Series is comprised of Questioned Documents, Digital and Multimedia evidence, and Latent Prints. These are currently in their initial draft stages pending review and input from the IFSA Board and appropriate technical working groups. These are slated for release at the 2017 IAFS meeting.

ASCLD President Triplett and IFSA President Jody Wolf represented both ASCLD and IFSA at two international meetings including the Australian and New Zealand Forensic Science Society (ANZFSS) 2016 Forensic Science Symposium and the 2016 Interpol Forensic Science Managers Symposium. They each provided a 20-minute presentation on our respective organizations along with an IFSA poster presentation at the ANZFSS meeting. And, they provided three poster presentations at Interpol.



Additionally, the IFSA website is nearing completion and is currently an active web site.

- Content development is pending.
 - Home Page – Complete: <http://www.ifsa-forensics.org/>
 - About Us – Pending stats from IFSA members (organizations, countries, members)
 - MRDs – Complete: <http://www.ifsa-forensics.org/minimum-requirements-documents/>
 - News & Updates – Pending
 - Contact Us – Pending

The ASCLD International Committee is also exploring several initiatives for action in 2017. They include the following:

- Spring 2017 Forensic Management Symposium in Mexico
- International ASCLD Leadership Academy
- Visiting Scientist Programs
- On-demand Webinars



International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN)



The International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) is a professional membership organization representing more than 3700 forensic nurses and other professionals who support and compliment the work of forensic nurses worldwide. IAFN establishes and improves standards of forensic nursing practice by fostering growth and development of the specialty. IAFN promotes increased knowledge and skills about forensic nursing globally through educational events, online training and the Journal of Forensic Nursing. The Association advances health policy related to violence and abuse through judicial, budgetary or regulatory processes at the state and federal level. This year, IAFN's public policy agenda focused on FY2017 Funding Request for Programs under the Violence against Women Act, Action to Address Sexual Assault on College Campuses, Sexual Assault Survivors' Rights Act (S.2566) and the "Justice for All Reauthorization Act" (S.2577/H.R.4602).

International Association of Identification (IAI)



Forensic Education is one of the IAI's primary missions. The IAI strives to be the premier professional association for those engaged in forensic identification and the scientific examination of physical evidence. Although the IAI's Annual International Forensic Educational Conference is sponsored by the parent body, it is organized in partnership with the regional IAI division. Next year's IAI Annual International Forensic Educational Conference will be July 29-August 4, 2018 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas.

During the week long educational conference world-renowned forensic professionals present current research in various forensic disciplines. The Conference offers general sessions, poster presentations, hands-on workshops, field trips, and vendor exhibits. Each of the forensic disciplines recognized the IAI offers some type of training. Levels of the educational sessions range from basic to advanced.

The IAI presently has eight certification programs available to practitioners. The IAI decided in February 2016 to leave the Forensic Specialties Accreditation Board (FSAB) and further its certification programs by pursuing ISO accreditation and is currently working towards ISO 10724 Accreditation.

The next IAI symposium is in Atlanta Georgia August 6-12, 2017

National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)



The NAME accreditation program accredits medical examiner, coroner, and autopsy services that provide medicolegal death investigation expertise to approximately 1/3 of the United States population. Currently, almost 130 million people live in jurisdictions covered by a NAME accredited office, with new offices applying at an ever-increasing rate. Very soon, NAME will offer the opportunity for offices to get ISO accreditation in addition to the NAME accreditation. ISO accreditation has been offered to crime laboratories for some time and many have achieved this level of accreditation. NAME had training in the ISO process for its inspectors at the recent NAME annual meeting in September 2016 in Minneapolis, MN.

The NAME Foundation is a nonprofit charitable corporation established in 1996. It is organized and operated exclusively for public charitable, educational, and scientific uses and purposes. The overall goals of the Foundation are to advocate for the profession of Forensic Pathology by promoting education and research. Over the years, the Foundation has, through the generous donation of its members, built a fund of more than \$300,000. The active NAME Foundation hopes to substantially build its financial resources and continue to actively promote and advance forensic pathology.

The recent NAME meeting in Minneapolis was the 50th anniversary and the largest attendance in the history of NAME. Many international attendees and presenters were also at NAME. The NAME interim meeting was held in conjunction with the AAFS meeting on February 14, 2017. The program was entitled “Law Enforcement Deaths.” The venue was the Hyatt Regency, New Orleans!

Special Update ISO TC 272 Republished Courtesy of ANZPAA

The Development of International Forensic Standards:

ISO TC 272 – Forensic Sciences met in Delft, Netherlands 20-23 June 2016 at the Netherlands Standards Body (NEN). The following P-members (participating members) were present at the TC272 meeting: Australia (SA), Canada (SCC), France (AFNOR), Germany (DIN), Japan (JSC/JCCLS), Netherland (NEN), Spain (AENOR), Sweden (SIS), United Kingdom (BSI) and USA (ANSI).

The Committee worked through the over 600 comments received for the following two standards:

1. ISO WD 20962 – Forensic Science Vocabulary
2. ISO WD 21043-1 – Forensic Analysis

The Committee again split into working groups to work on the two draft standards. TC 272 also addressed work that has recently been transferred from European Committee for Standardization (CEN) under the Vienna Agreement. These were the standards that CEN had been working on covering the following:

1. ISO WD 21043-1 - Crime scene investigation, exhibit handling and control (to be used for development of current standard in development)
2. ISO 21043-2 Delivery of results through the processes of forensic science examinations and analysis of various types of physical material
3. ISO 21043-3 Evaluation and interpretation of the results of forensic science examinations and analysis in the context of the case
4. ISO 21043-4 Reporting results and conclusions from the forensic science examination and analysis, data exchange and the standardization of the documentation used for forensic purposes. The committee agreed to continue drafting ISO 21043- part 1 and amalgamate the CEN and ISO drafts, but put ISO WD 21043- parts 2-4 back to the PWI stage. These standards can be considered at a later stage when resources become available and will re-ballot the NWIPs for 8 weeks prior to commencing any work.

The committee resolved to submit ISO 20962 and ISO 21043-1 for Committee Draft (CD) stage 30:0 and an 8 week member country ballot ending at the end of September. The CD Draft version will need to be ready for submission to ISO as a Draft International Standard by May 2017.

The UK British Standards Institute (BSI) has received approval from the Home Office to transfer IP of the UK PAS 377 to ISO. BSI has provided a Form 4 for the development of the standard under ISO and the PAS will be used as a working draft (ISO/PWI 20964). The new standard will focus on the manufacture of consumables other than DNA. The Committee agreed that the working draft will go committee members for feedback before being submitted to ISO for country member voting.

The Canadian delegation hosted a meeting of ISO/TC 272 21-24 November 2016. Spain has confirmed to host the 8th meeting of ISO/TC 272 in May 2017. Japan and Sweden have kindly offered to host subsequent meetings (November 2017 and May 2018 respectively).

CLOSING

We hope you have enjoyed the newsletter. CFSO will do its best to keep you abreast of the most important news in the forensic community that we represent, as well as important legislation topics.