



*American Academy of Forensic Sciences
American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors
International Association for Identification
National Association of Medical Examiners
Society of Forensic Toxicologists/ American Board of Forensic Toxicology*

January 28, 2022

The Honorable Gina M. Raimondo
Office of the Secretary
US Department of Commerce
Washington, DC

We are writing to you on behalf of the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO) and the 20,000 forensic science practitioners that CFSO represents. Our member organizations listed in our letterhead represent almost the entirety of the forensic science practitioner community. As such, we look forward to working with you and your staff to continue to advance forensic science and ensure that the nation's forensic science infrastructure has the appropriate resources to provide a continuous, timely and reliable product so invaluable to our nation's legal system for both identifying and convicting the guilty and exonerating the innocent.

We urge you to significantly increase funding in the FY23 budget request for forensic science research in NIST, the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) that initiates the development of forensic science standards, and for grants to Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) that turn the OSAC work product into national consensus standards.

As you know, the NIST Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) is directly the result of the 2009 National Academy's study concerning the validity and reliability of forensic science. Standards for methods of examination conducted by forensic scientists are essential for the validity and reliability of analyses carried out in crime laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner offices. Equally important are the Standards Developing Organizations. Accredited SDOs open the review process to all stakeholders in the forensic community, and are essential for the creation of standards for placement on the OSAC registry. Further, foundational research by NIST is important to establish the validity of forensic disciplines, their potential limitations, and avenues for advancement of the sciences.

Forensic Science is a critical tool, and has become invaluable to our nation's criminal justice system to both identify and convict the guilty as well as exonerate the innocent. Standards setting is critical to ensuring the reliability, validity, and consistency in the application of scientific methods. Consistent and steady research is also important as science advances, and the science of forensics must continue to move forward. NIST's programs are extremely important, and allow us to achieve those goals. We ask that you fully fund those programs.

On behalf of our members, we thank you for your attention to the critical role these NIST programs provide to our criminal justice system and the stakeholder community it serves. Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

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