



# CFSO

*Consortium of Forensic  
Science Organizations*

**Consortium of Forensic  
Science Organizations (CFSO)**

AAFS Update 2025



## Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)

- AAFS
- ASCLD
- IACME
- IAI
- NAME
- SOFT/ABFT

The mission of the CFSO is to **speak with a single forensic science voice** on behalf of its member organizations of matters of mutual interest regarding forensic science, 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 and coroner offices. The primary focus of the CFSO is national, state, and local policymakers, as well as the United States Congress.



## CFSO Strategic Plan 2024

### GOALS

- A. To continue to be recognized as the **primary organization** representing the forensic community to policy makers
- B. To **increase resources** needed for the forensic science enterprise
- C. To **advance the validity, reliability, and reproducibility** of forensic science and forensic medicine practices
- D. To **develop an ongoing federal forensic science research strategy**
- E. **To be a single voice to policy makers** on behalf of the forensic science community

# CFISO Strategic Plan 2025

## OBJECTIVES

- A. To meet the current and expected need for **qualified personnel** for the forensic science community
- B. To fund the ongoing **professional development** of forensic practitioners and forensic support services
- C. To establish and maintain **validation and performance verification programs and collaboratives**
- D. To improve and expand forensic **information technology systems, infrastructure, and interoperability**
- E. To **simplify the grant application and management process**, and develop collaborative applicant resources

# CFSO Strategic Plan 2025

## STRATEGY

- A. To maintain a collaborative relationship among CFSO organizations to advance their collective objectives **(CFSO Board Meetings Bimonthly, Listening Sessions, President's Council)**
- B. To maintain a productive relationship with Congressional and other governmental entities
- C. To collaborate with and support crime victim organizations and other stakeholders on issues of mutual interest
- D. To support forensic science education for officers of the court, the judiciary, and law enforcement.



The background of the slide is a faded, light-colored image of the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C., showing its iconic dome and neoclassical architecture. The text is overlaid on this image in a bold, black, serif font.

# **HOW DOES CFSO DETERMINE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES MEMBERSHIP DRIVEN**

**AAFS CFSO Representative (Ken Melson) and/or CFSO Lobbyist (Beth Lavach) meet with AAFS leadership to update priorities from year before.**

**Priorities are then “racked and stacked” against political environment and legislative appropriations.**

**Strategy developed and implemented:**

**Example: SDO**

**(All CFSO Board representatives of the various organizations meet with their organizational leadership to bring forward the priorities for those organizations)**

# AAFS FY25/26 Priority List

- **SDO**
  - **Funded in FY25 House Appropriations Bill**
  - **Do not expect SDO to be in proposed budget for FY26**
  - **Will need to re-authorize for FY27 onward**
- **MEC Bill**
  - **Introduced in 118<sup>th</sup> Congress (2024)**
  - **Re-introduction to occur in 119<sup>th</sup> Congress**
  - **Out-reach to Members of Congress critical**
- **COVERDELL**
  - **Funding supported in both Houses-NEEDS ASSESSMENT IS KEY**




# **FY 26 BUDGET**

## **Other CFSO Member Legislative/Funding Priorities**

- Pharmacology of Emerging Drug Research and Development Funding
- Continued Funding for Coverdell-Increase needed
- Passage of MEC bill
- Address inclusion of MEC data in CDC databases
- Designation of MECs as First Responders
- Inclusion in funding for psychological trauma to all FSSPs
- Continued efforts for interoperability of AFIS/ABIS/MBIS
- Address how to fund OSAC recommendations





**Legislative Items: Funding**  
**House and Senate Pending FY25**  
**FY26 What to Expect-Maybe**

# WHERE IS THE BUDGET

**FY 25-Appropriations still pending and awaiting “toplines”**

**Expect cuts to budget**

**March 14 CR expires**

**Possible** year-long CR

**FY26-”Skinny” budget to be delivered in May “ish”**

**Congress moving forward without the budget once reconciliation is done**

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT REMAINS CRITICAL**

**NIJ Listening Session**

**Wednesday, February 19, 2025**

**11:00 am – 1:00 pm BCC 301**



# July 2024 Newsletter Budget Language

<https://thecfso.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/July-Budget-Newsletter.pdf>

DOJ	Final FY24	FY25 Proposed	HAC	SAC
Program				
Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant		\$524.5m	\$847,810m	\$720,338m
Forensic Science Research and Development Program (new program)	\$8m dedicated to forensics	\$60.3m (No breakout for forensics indicated)		\$34m
National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)	\$3m	\$3.5m	\$6m	\$3.5m
Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains Act	\$5m	\$6m	\$3m	\$6m
Forensics Ballistics in Higher Education	\$???	0	0	\$2.5m
DNA Programs	\$153m	\$168m	\$153m	\$170m
DNA Analysis and Capacity Enhancement Program-Debbie Smith	\$120m	\$130m	\$121m	\$130m
Other Federal, State, and Local Forensic Activities	\$15m	\$19m	0	\$20m
Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Program	\$14m	\$14m	\$14m	\$15m
Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program Guide	\$4.0m	\$5	\$9m	\$15m

DOJ	FY24	FY25 Proposed	HAC	SAC
Community Teams to Reduce the Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Backlog	\$51.5m	\$55m	\$51.5m	\$55m
Regional Sexual Assault Investigative Training Academies/Access to Sexual Assault Nurse Exams	\$20m	\$20m	\$15m	\$5m
Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Grants	\$34m	\$35m	\$28m	\$35m
Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner System	(in State and Local funds)	(in State and Local funds)	\$2.5m	<i>*in the State and Local DNA Monies</i>
Forensic Support for Opioid and Synthetic Drug Investigations	No carve out	\$17m	No carve-out	0
<b>Commerce: NIST</b>				
Forensic Science Research	\$22m	\$22m	\$22m	\$22m
OSAC	\$3.5m	N/A	\$3.5m	\$3.5m
Technical Merit Evaluations	\$1.5m	N/A	\$1.2m	\$1.2m
SDO Grant	\$1.5m	N/A	\$1.5m	N/A
<b>HHS: CDC</b>				
Opioid Overdose Prevention and Surveillance	\$505.579 (CR)	\$505.579m	\$500m transferred to SAMHSA-see language below	N/A
National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS)	\$24.5 (CR)	\$24.5m	N/A	N/A
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program		\$15m	\$15m	N/A
Public Health Data Modernization	\$175m	\$41.7m	\$175m	N/A
Public Health Data Modernization (PPHF)	0	\$182.9m		

N/A=not available



A wide-angle photograph of the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The building is a large, white, neoclassical structure with a prominent central dome topped by a statue. The building is surrounded by a green lawn and several trees. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. A black rounded rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

# Legislative Items: Funding FY25

# DOJ FY24 Language

## OJP

### HOUSE

**Medical Examiner and Coroner Research Needs-** Committee strongly supports NIJ including the toxicology of emerging drugs in its research priorities.

**National Missing and Unidentified Persons Systems-**Committee encourages the DOJ to continue support for high-density sequencing technology.

**Forensic genetic genealogical DNA analysis-**support for use with indigenous women, Committee directs FGJ to be used regardless of suspected death, and the Committee directs DOJ to provide reports to Congress on FGJ use.

**Sexual Assault Kit Initiative and Tracking:** The Committee supports cross-jurisdictional and cross-platform sharing to identify repeat offenders and directs DOJ to submit a report about States adherence to abiding by standards for collecting physical evidence.

**Digital Evidence-**The Congress directs DOJ establish and formalize a tiered digital evidence enterprise program.

### SENATE

**Forensic Ballistics and Higher Education:** Subject to approval from, educational institutions can join NIBIN in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies.

**Digital Evidence-** The Committee requests a report on the eLitigation Steering Committee

**HEMP Testing Technology-** Continues to encourage access to field testing instruments

**Sexual Assault Kit Initiative:** Committee directs DOJ to provide Congress a report of the partially tested kits.



# DOJ FY24 Language (continued)

## OJP

### HOUSE

#### **Interoperability of Automated Biometric Identification Systems:**

The Committee expresses concern that databases remain interoperable and notes there is no single database. The Committee directs NIJ and NIST to report on an update of work done to date to resolve the matter, barriers to a federal database and what is needed to solve

**ATF-**Congress directs the prioritization of the development and implementation of automated ballistic imaging triage technologies and to implement existing technology that improve the efficiencies and accuracy of bullet imaging comparisons. They are also directed to coordinate with State and local law enforcement as well as provide a report on the effort.

### SENATE

**Forensic Ballistics and Higher Education:** Subject to approval from, educational institutions can join NIBIN in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies.

**ATF:** Congress supports efforts to expand use of NIBIN to all law enforcement agencies and directs expansion to New England and Southwest border regions.

**Training Law Enforcement Partners:** ATF is directed to continue to provide training to local and State law enforcement agencies on submitting trace requests of firearms recovered in criminal investigations to ATF.



# FY 25 Needs Assessment

*Forensic Science Operational Needs Assessment.*-NIJ shall provide a report to the Committees on the projected workload, backlog, personnel, workforce, resources, necessary turnaround times for law enforcement officers and officers of the court, and equipment needs of forensic science providers and forensic medical service providers, no later than 180 days after the enactment of this act. The report should be conducted in conjunction with the Forensic Laboratory Needs Technology Working Group and the Federal Interagency Medicolegal Death Investigation Working Group. Further, the Department shall consider in its reporting the most recent BJS census reports on publicly funded forensic science service providers, digital forensic science service providers, and medical examiner and coroner offices; the NIJ report entitled, "Report to Congress: Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices" and other relevant studies; and the practical and applied implications of any other scientific reports on forensic science with relevance to the operational, quality management, and practical needs of the forensic science community.

CFSO has written a letter to the AG (see website) urging this report be done in a timely manner and outlined the request of what should be covered. It appears NIJ has just started to work on this report with RTI. Please attend the meeting here at the AAFS meeting **Wednesday, February 19, 2025 11:00 am – 1:00 pm BCC 301**

Senate recognized late start and inserted language in the FY25 budget encouraging the completion of the study.

**IT IS CRITICAL THIS STUDY IS SUBSTNATIVE AND PROVIDES QUANTIFIABLE DATA ON THE NEEDS**



# NIST FY2025 Budget

## HOUSE

**Investigative Forensic Genetic Genealogical Analysis.** —The Committee supports NIST’s development of written and physical standards for investigative forensic genetic genealogical analysis as an investigative lead for law enforcement and within the constitutional confines of the justice system.

**The Centers of Excellence.** —The recommendation includes sufficient funding to maintain the NIST Centers of Excellence, including the Forensic Science Center of Excellence, the Advanced Materials Center of Excellence, and the Community Resilience Center of Excellence.

**Forensic Sciences.** —The recommendation includes \$22,000,000 for forensic science research, including no less than \$3,500,000 to support the Organization of Scientific Area Committees, no less than \$1,500,000 for a competitive Standards Development Organization grant, and no less than \$1,200,000 to support technical merit evaluations.

## SENATE

*Forensic Sciences.* —The Committee provides not less than the fiscal year 2024 enacted level for forensic science research, including level funding to support the Organization of Scientific Area Committees and technical merit evaluations.



# CDC (House Language) 11% cut

***Data Modernization.*** —The Committee is pleased to see progress towards the implementation of CDC’s data modernization efforts and encourages the agency to continue to invest in the five key pillars of data modernization: (1) electronic case reporting; (2) laboratory information management systems; (3) syndromic surveillance; (4) electronic vital records systems; and (5) the national notifiable disease surveillance system. **The Committee also recognizes CDC’s efforts to engage with States, Tribes, localities, and territories through data use agreements for core data sources as well as key recommendations from the Advisory Committee to the Director Data and Surveillance Workgroup.** The Committee directs CDC, within 90 days of the enactment of this Act, to provide a report regarding how these efforts are advancing the agency towards the development and implementation of enterprise-level public health data systems.

The Committee recognizes the critical role the block grant plays in State and Territory systems across the country, giving States and Territories the flexibility to direct resources to address the most pressing needs of their communities. The Committee also recognizes that the 20 percent prevention set aside within the SUPTRS Block Grant is a vital source of funding for primary prevention. The Committee further notes that the transfer of opioid overdose prevention and surveillance funding from CDC to the SUPTRS Block Grant will increase the availability of treatment and recovery services given the dramatic differences in administrative overhead costs assessed by the respective agencies.

The SUPTRS funding level reflects a transfer of \$500,000,000 from the CDC to SAMHSA. Of the \$506,079,000 provide for the CDC program in fiscal year 2024, \$114,000,000, or 23 percent, went to administrative costs. The transfer of State program funding from CDC to SAMHSA should increase the funding available to States for these activities by more than \$63,000,000 in reduced Federal administration expenses alone.



# **LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Debbie Smith Act of 2023 (Passed)**

- Expires Calendar Year 2024
- House passed HR 1105, FY24-FY29, 11/14/23
- Senate passed S 499, FY25-FY29, 11/2/23
- Senate passed HR 1105 , FY24-29, 7/11/24
- Signed into law 7/30/24
- Both bills reauthorize with no changes in language and include reauthorization of audits in Sec 2 of FY2000 Act

## LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Backlog Justice Act

To improve processing of samples of sexual assault evidence

- Creates database at DOJ of sexual assault kit status
- \$5M for training S&L analysts at FBI
- \$10M for validation and tech transfer
- \$1.5M increase in STOP grants
- Significant CFSO input

119<sup>th</sup> Bipartisan Introduction is planned



## LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Carla Walker Act

- Initiated by vendor/private forensic science laboratory
- CFSO actively provided comments, 4<sup>th</sup> draft is being worked
- Current draft
  - creates a pilot
  - funds labs for equipment and outsourcing
  - directs DOJ to draft a strategic plan of how to implement
- Stakeholders have provided edits

Pending Introduction in 119th

# LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: MEC Legislation Introduced

- Assistance in medical examiner and coroner workforce shortage
- Certification help and training money for forensic death investigators and toxicologists
- Expand funding for Forensic Pathology Fellowships
- Introduced
- Bipartisan and Bicameral
- Will be reintroduced in 119<sup>th</sup>

NEED GRASSROOTS ASSISTANCE



# LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Other Legislation

Preserving Evidence in Natural Disasters

Opioids Act

Stop Smuggling Illicit Drugs

Cold Case Modernization

Forensic Science Research and Standards Act

Forensic Science Week (Senate Res. 359) September 15-21, 2024

MDI Week (Senate Res. 532) January 21-27, 2024

# FORENSIC SCIENCE CAUCUS

## House Forensic Science Caucus

Caucuses help coordinate lawmakers efforts to advance specific policy proposals with allied advocacy groups outside Congress. They serve an informational purpose to educate members of Congress.

**Bipartisan Leadership and Participation—**  
Congressman Guest (R-MS)  
Congressman Cleaver (D-MO)

First briefing was in November 2024

**\*\*Encourage your House of Representative Members from your state to participate**



## Grant Awareness

### Missing and Unidentified Humans Remains Program (MUHR)

- Authorization passed in 115<sup>th</sup> Congress
- Anticipated again in 2025
- Available to Statewide, County and/or units of local government
- Solicitation is competitive

<https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2022-171404>

# Grant Awareness

## COVERDELL

- Available for preparation for accreditation and continued accreditation
- Spring 2025 solicitation



## Grant Awareness

### SAKI

- Advocated with DOJ to eliminate provisions for mtDNA before WGS and also provisions eliminating private genealogists.
- Spring 2025 solicitation

## Grant Awareness

### CEBR

- Spring 2025 solicitation
- Advocating on NEPA assessment issues
- Likely withheld from sanctuary cities



# Agency Communications

## Budget Letters

- Department of Commerce
- DOJ-Attorney General
- Health and Human Services

# Agency Communications

## Administrative meetings:

- Office of Justice Programs
- ATF
- NIST
- HHS/CDC
- BJA
- NHTSA



# Monitoring

## Supreme Court Decision: (January 2024 Newsletter)

- Jason Smith v. Arizona – Confrontation Clause
- Information on CFSO website
- Expert panel making AAFS presentation
- White paper to community and webinar

# The Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations

## CURRENT LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS

CFSO is an association of forensic science professional organizations:



[American Academy of Forensic Sciences](#)  
(AAFS Introduction)



[American Board of Forensic Toxicology](#)  
(ABFT Website)



[American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors](#)  
(ASCLD Introduction)



[International Association for Identification](#)  
(IAI Introduction)



[International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners](#)  
(IACME Introduction)



[National Association of Medical Examiners](#)  
(NAME Introduction)



[Society of Forensic Toxicologists and American Board of Forensic Toxicology](#)  
(SOFT Introduction)

[Education](#)

[Political Outreach](#)

[Institutional Outreach](#)

[Public Outreach](#)

[Organizational Outreach](#)

[Scheduled Events](#)

[Official Proclamations](#)

Helpful Links:

- [National Forensic Science Week Facebook Page](#)
- [Crime Lab Tour Videos](#)
- [National Forensic Science Week Member Website](#)

The CFSO Ad Hoc Committee Members for National Forensic Science Week are: Jeff Gurvis (IAI), Penny Dechant (IAI), Ken Martin (IAI), Zain Bhaloo (AAFS), Matthew Go (AAFS), Ken Melson (AAFS), Jennifer Naugle (ASCLD), Tim Kupferschmid (ASCLD), Erin Forry (ASCLD), Matthew Gamette (ASCLD), Jenna Aungst (NAME), MJ Menendez (NAME), James Gill (NAME)

## Unique to the CFSO Website:

- CFSO website for National Forensic Science Week
- Legislative Agenda
- White Papers
- Newsletters



# PUBLICATIONS

119th Congress (2025-2026)

by admin / December 26, 2024

## CFSO Newsletters

- January 2024
- April 24 Budget Update
- April 24
- April 24 Budget Update FY25
- July 24 Debbie Smith Update
- July 24 Budget Update FY25
- December year in review

## Recent CFSO Letters

- DOC
- HHS
- DOJ
- NHTSA



Legislation

Public Laws

Hearings

Committee Lists

Advocacy Tools

Forensic Science Caucus

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- CFSO Strategy and Strategic Plan
- Firearms
- Toxicology
- NamUs
- Needs Assessment
- OSAC/SDOs
- Firearms Workforce
- AFIS Interoperability
- At Home Rape Kits
- FIGG
- Buy America Act
- Emerging Drugs

