



CFSO

*Consortium of Forensic
Science Organizations*

Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)

AAFS Update – 2025/2026



Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)

- AAFS
- ASCLD
- IACME
- IAI
- NAME
- SOFT

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 2026

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

CFSSO Strategic Plan 2026

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.



Legislative Budget FY26 Funding

FEDERAL BUDGET STATUS

- **FY25 budget passed as a Year Long Continuing Resolution-set tone for FY26**
- **FY26 budget**
 - **Commerce, Justice, Science signed into law 1/23/2026**
 - **HHS (CDC) signed into law 2/2026**
- **FY27**
 - **Budget release expected in March**
 - **Congress will assess and complete**

FY26 Budget Results DOJ

DOJ	Final FY24/25*	FY26 Proposed	HOUSE	SENATE	Final
Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Program	\$14m	\$14m	\$14m	\$14m	\$13m
Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program Guide	\$ 4m	\$ 4m	\$9m	\$4m	\$4m
National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)	N/A See above under Byrne JAG	N/A See above under Byrne JAG	\$11m	N/A See above under Byrne JAG	N/A See above under Byrne JAG
Community Teams to Reduce the Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Backlog	\$51.5m	\$51.5m	\$51.5	\$51.5m	\$50m
Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Grants Strengthen Medical Examiner-Coroner	\$34m	\$10m	\$28m \$2.5m	\$34m. ¹	\$32.5m

FY 26 Budget Results DOJ

DOJ	Final FY24/25*	FY26 Proposed	HOUSE	SENATE	Final
Program					
Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Discretionary	\$499.03m	\$446.00m	\$402.84m	\$569.15m	\$537.97m
National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)	\$3m	\$3m	\$11m	\$3m	\$3m
Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains Act	\$5m	\$5m	See below under DNA Programs	\$5m	\$3m
Forensics Ballistics in Higher Education	\$2.5m	0	0	\$1.5m	N/A
Project Safe Neighborhood	\$19m	\$21m	\$20m	\$19m	\$13m
DNA Programs	\$153m	\$148m	\$154m	\$148m	\$138m
DNA Analysis and Capacity Enhancement Program-Debbie Smith	\$120m	\$120m	\$120m	\$120m	\$115m
Other Federal, State, and Local Forensic Activities (note includes Medical Examiner/Coroner programs)	\$15m	\$10m	N/A	\$10m	\$6m

FY26 Budget Results DOJ

DOJ	Final FY24/25*	FY26 Proposed	HOUSE	SENATE	Final
CARA (Comprehensive Opioid Use Reduction Activities) Forensic Support for Opioid and Synthetic Drug Investigations	\$403m	\$418m	\$420m \$17m	\$420m	\$403m
NIJ Research and Development	\$30m	\$22m	\$22m	\$60m (moved to OJP)	\$22m
Bureau of Justice Statistics	\$35m	\$35m	\$33m	Included above in R&D	\$33m
Wrongful Conviction Review	\$12m	0	N/A	\$12m	\$11.5

FY26 Budget Results NIST

Commerce: NIST	Final FY24/25 *	FY26 Proposed	House	Senate	Final
Forensic Science Research	\$22m	N/A	\$20m	\$22m ²	\$22m
OSAC	\$3.5m	N/A	\$3.5m	\$3.5m	\$3.5m
Technical Merit Evaluations	\$1.5m	N/A	\$1.2m	\$1.5m	\$1.5m
SDO Grant	\$1.5m	N/A	\$1.5m	N/A	\$1.5m

FY26 Budget Results CDC

HHS: CDC	Final FY24/25*	FY26 Proposed	House	Senate	Final
Opioid Overdose Prevention and Surveillance	\$505.579m	\$475.579m	\$505.579m	\$505.579m	\$505.579m
*Realigned in FY26 to Administrations Administration for a Healthy America (AHA)					
National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS)	\$24.5m	\$24.5m	\$24.5m	\$24.5m	\$24.5m
Public Health Data Modernization Public Health Data Modernization (PPHF)	\$175m 0	\$175m	\$185m	\$150m	\$185m
SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners)	\$15m	\$15m	\$15m	\$15m	\$15m

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 Budget Language
FY26**

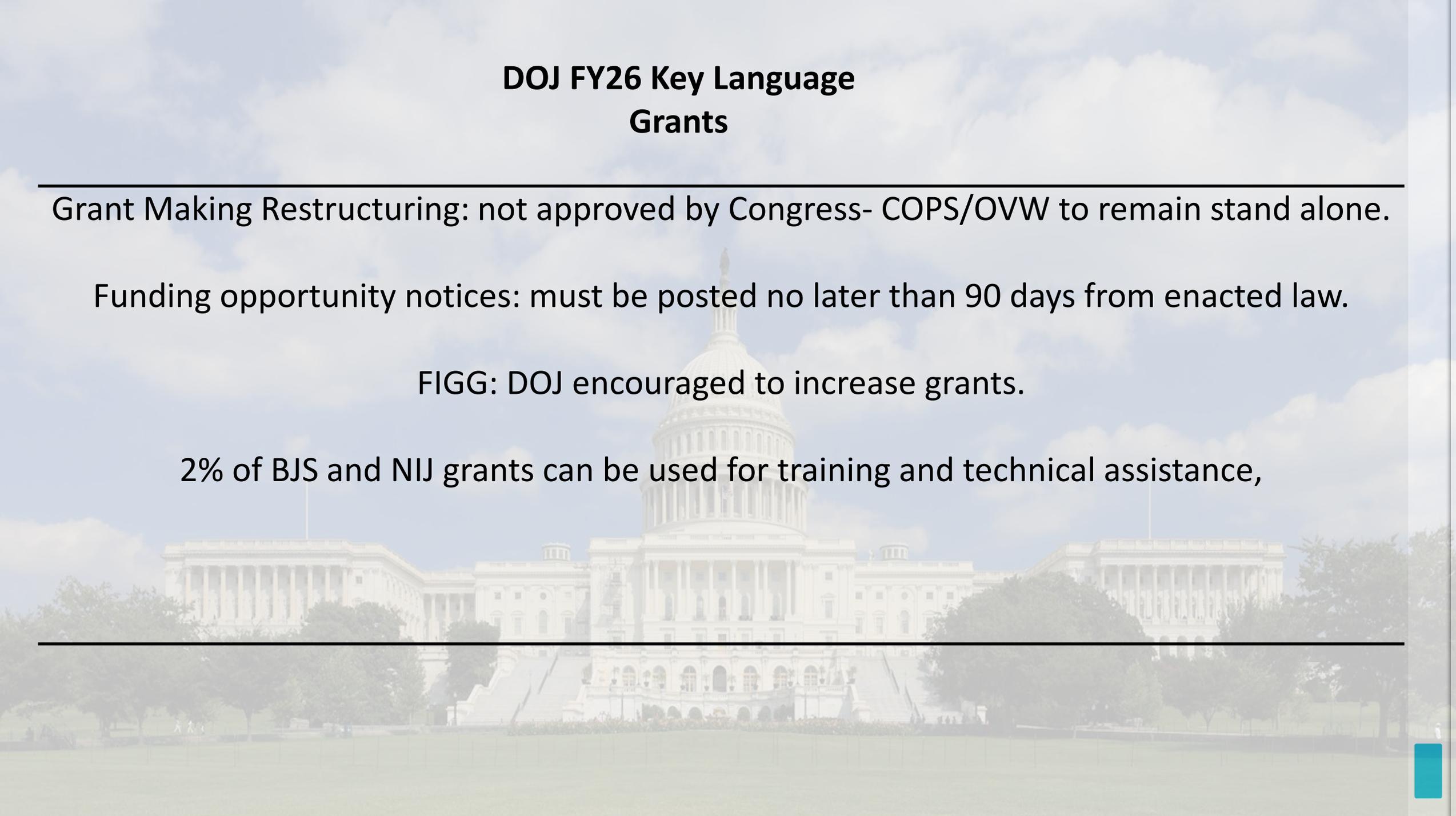
DOJ FY26 Key Language Grants

Grant Making Restructuring: not approved by Congress- COPS/OVW to remain stand alone.

Funding opportunity notices: must be posted no later than 90 days from enacted law.

FIGG: DOJ encouraged to increase grants.

2% of BJS and NIJ grants can be used for training and technical assistance,



FY26 Language

Sexual Assault Kit Initiative- Identify best practices for addressing issues that arise in such matters as forensic advancements, investigation, prosecution. Report back to Congress on the number of partially tested kits and backlogs on testing.

Sexual Assault Kit Tracking-In coordination with NIST DOJ shall provide a report detailing State adherence to collection standards as established by the OSAC. The Committee also directs the Department to consider the usefulness of recommendations to provide transparency to data currently residing at the Department from use of Federal funds.

FY26 Language

NIBIN: Congress fully supports and directs ATF to expand it to the highest degree possible

Project Safe Neighborhood: \$13m to assist in rapidly screening ballistics/submitting to NIBIN

CFSO Specific FY26 Language

Interoperability of Automated Biometric Identification Systems- The Committee is concerned about the lack of interoperability among various automated biometric identification systems, and notes that unlike DNA there is no single mechanism to search for latent prints across jurisdictions. The Committee understands that NIST and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) have spent a significant amount of time working to address this issue, including the production of the standards and guidance necessary to support the development of interoperable systems, but the problem remains. Not later than 60 days after the enactment of this Act, **the Committee directs NIJ, in coordination with NIST, to provide an update on work done to date to resolve this matter, the barriers that remain, and a path forward.**

Medical Examiner and Coroner Research Needs: The Committee understands that there is a lack of research and development being conducted to assist medical examiners and coroners in identifying and classifying trends of new and emerging drugs. **The Committee strongly supports NIJ including the toxicology of emerging drugs in its research priorities.**

FY 25 Needs Assessment

FY26 budget reiterated that they expect this to be done.

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.

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

LEGISLATIVE 119th

- Congress very focused on opioids
- Congress has been distracted by oversight and “politics” and budget

75 bills passed in 119th Congress

274 bills 118th Congress

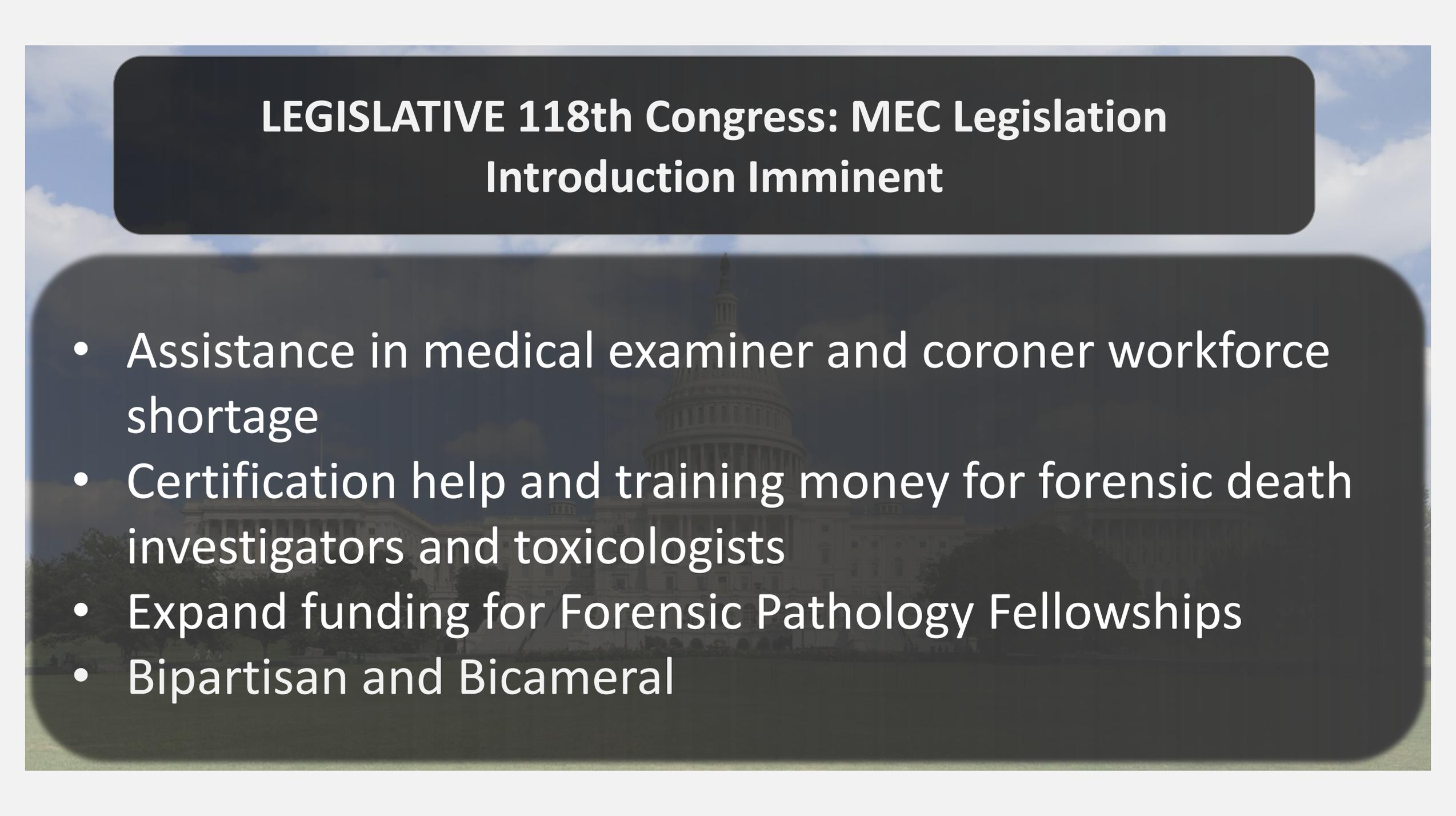
362 bills 117th Congress

LEGISLATIVE 119th

- **Carla Walker**
- **MEC Bill**
- **HALT Act-passed**
- **Opioid Bills**
- **Drunk Driving Prevention and Enforcement Act**

LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Carla Walker Act

- Initiated by vendor
- CFSO actively provided comments, 4th 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



LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: MEC Legislation Introduction Imminent

- 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
- Bipartisan and Bicameral

LEGISLATIVE 119th Congress: HALT Act (Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl)

Became Law---July 16, 2025

Public Law 119-26

- Permanently places fentanyl related substances as a class in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act
- Offenses involving fentanyl-related substances are triggered by the same quantity of the thresholds and the same penalties as offenses involving fentanyl analogues
- Established new alternative registration process for certain schedule I research
- Permits single registration for related research sites in certain circumstances
- Waives the requirement for a new inspection in certain situations
- Allows a registered researcher to perform certain manufacturing activities with small quantities without obtaining a manufacturing registration

LEGISLATIVE 119th Congress: Opioid Bills

191 Bills regarding Opioid Use Introduced

- Opioids Act: provides grants for labs, ME's and Coroners to process drug data and for training.
- Nitazene Control Act-amends the Controlled Substance Act to permanently schedule Nitazene
- CARA reauthorization- Reauthorizes DOJ CARA grants

CFSO Working with authors on bill edits

NOTE: new GAO report, February 26, "Street Drug Analysis" recommends increase resources, standardized reporting, and increased information sharing.

LEGISLATIVE 119th Congress: Drunk Driving Prevention and Enforcement Act

- **Provides a "Prize" for impaired driving prevention technology and directs a rule to mandate in new vehicles**
- **Establishes a Traffic Safety Enforcement Center of Excellence**
- **Establishes a National Drug-Involved Crash Data Collection System to collect toxicology data and provides grants to states to set up labs and collect data.**

CFSSO working with author on technical modifications

LEGISLATIVE 118th Congress: Other Legislation

Forensic Science Week Designation

- Senate Resolution 395 (2025)
- National Forensic Science Week 2025 was recognized from September 14–20, 2025, to honor the professionals, labs, and technologies that support the criminal justice system.

CFSO Member Priority List FY27

From Member Organizations

- Fully Fund the Standards Development Organization
**Note: grant requires re-authorization in FY26 also
- Support funding for DOJ Grants: Coverdell, Debbie Smith, NamUs, MEC grants, SAKI, R&D funding and other forensic related funding.
- Support funding for CDC Grants: OD2A, National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS), SUDORS, and Data Modernization with a specific carve out for MECs

CFSO FY27 Budget Prep

- **“Listening Sessions” with Member Organizations**
- **Development of agency specific “White Papers” based on needs of Members expressed during listening sessions**
- **Meetings with Federal Agencies to present needs-2026**
- **Rack and Stack requests and bring to key Congressional Policymakers**
- **Congress and modify when budget delivered**
- **What are your concerns in the budget or with policy matters?**

Grant Awareness

2025

- **Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR)**
- **Paul Coverdell Forensic Enhancement Grants**
- **Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner System**
- Posted September 11, 2025—Closed October 29, 2025—Reopened due to government shutdown---Closed again
- Current estimated 2025 grant awards—April 2026
- 2026 Funding provision of 90-day solicitations??

Grant Awareness

2025

- **Missing and Unidentified Humans Remains Program (MUHR)**
- **Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI)**
- **Prosecuting Cold Cases using DNA**
- **Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence**
- **Posted September 17, 2025—Closed November 3, 2025**
- **Appendix 1—Chief Executive Officer Declaration**
(2) I have carefully reviewed (or have received pertinent legal advice concerning) 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373(a) & (b) and 1644, including the prohibitions on certain actions by State and local government entities, agencies, and officials regarding information on citizenship and immigration status.

Agency Communications

Federal Agency Cuts or Proposed Cuts Documents

- NIJ FTCOE
- FBI Footwear Analysis
- NIST Firearm/Toolmark Lab

Budget Letters

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

COVERDELL ADVOCACY

West Virginia University data from Project Foresight lists growth in national forensic backlogs from 2017-2023 of up to 13%. Turnaround times in the United States forensic service providers from 2017- 2023 have increased by up to **40%**, including 10% in DNA casework, 19% in drug chemistry, 18% in toxicology, and 18% in firearms analysis. Specifically, the backlog in blood alcohol over the period from 2017-2023 was up 100%, crime scene was up 270%, controlled substances was up 23%, DNA was up 42%, forensic pathology was up 139%, and post-mortem toxicology was up 38%. In addition, States recently surveyed by our organization provided data to support that firearms case submissions increased between 18% and 154% in the last few years. During the same timeframe, the turnaround times (time from intake into the lab to forensic report issued) increased 954% in blood alcohol, 25% in crime scene, 232% in controlled substances, 88% in DNA, and 246% in post-mortem toxicology. However, funding has not increased to address these issues.

Agency Communications

Administrative Items

- ONDCP Administration Strategy
- HHS Letter on Attestation for Health Care Records
- Federal agency RIF and Reorganization Plans
- NIST communication on forensics staff and program cuts
- DOJ sanctuary jurisdiction information updates
- Advocacy on grant freezes and information updates

Monitoring

- **Supreme Court Decision: (January 2024 Newsletter)**
 - Jason Smith v. Arizona – Confrontation Clause
 - Documents on CFSO Website for Court Decisions
- **Federal Grant Funding Releases (2025 & 2026)**
- **Rapid DNA Implementation and Funding**
- **Data exchange and data network development (NIEMOpen)**
- **CODIS access by private laboratories**
- **Return of FTCoe resources to public websites**
- **NIST RADAR Program**
- **NIST AI Program**
- **BJs Census and Forensic Science Data Programs**
- **State legislative encroachment on FP (e.g. Excited delirium)**

National Forensic Science Week:

- National Forensic Science Educator of the Year
- Five NIST National Webinar Presentations on Forensic Science
Presentations are archived on CFSO website
- National Proclamation for 2025
- Website Links Updated
- More events and proclamations than ever
- Committee revamped and meetings for 2026 starting soon



CFSO 2025

National High School Forensic Science Educator of the Year



SCOTT RUBINS

New Rochelle High School
New Rochelle, NY

NEW ROCHELLE, NY
NEW ROCHELLE HIGH SCHOOL

SCOTT RUBINS

PUBLICATIONS

CFSO Newsletters

- [Early March 2025](#)
- [Late March 2025](#)
- [June 2025 Budget Update FY26](#)
- [June 2025 2nd Budget Update FY26 \(June 20 2025\)](#)
- [July 2025](#)
- [July 2025 FY26 Budget](#)
- [August 4 2025](#)



119th Congress (2025-2026)

by admin / December 26, 2024

Legislation

Public Laws

Hearings

Committee Lists

Advocacy Tools

Forensic Science Caucus

Forensic Science Caucus



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

7/14/2025

Attention Forensic Science Practitioner

Encourage your Member of Congress to join the Congressional Forensic Science Caucus

The 119th Congress (2025-2027) has started, and there has been significant movement on budgets. Almost 20% of the Members of Congress are new and don't have the background or in some cases the significance of forensics within our justice system. To help, Congressman Guest (R-MS) and Congressman Cleaver (D-MO) have again created a "Congressional Forensic Science Caucus". Below is their description of the caucus and its mission:

The Congressional Forensic Science Caucus is an informal Congressional Member of Congress group dedicated to issues related for forensic science and education other Members on this subject. The purpose of this bipartisan caucus is to educate Members of Congress on matters critical to the criminal justice system that pertain to forensics science and to advocate for legislation that ensures the sciences' continuous advancement, wide availability to investigators and litigants, and compliance with the highest standards of quality assurance. Forensic science capabilities are changing rapidly, and Congress is often presented with legislation that addresses, for expel, the needs for further research, analyst training, and the implementation of new instrumentation and standards for its use. Our caucus serves as a forum to facilitate important information about these relevant topics and work to advance these significant issues."



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
- Strategic Emerging Drug Laboratories
- MEC Attestation for Health Records
- MEC's as First Responders
- Rapid DNA Statement
- (Pending) Private Lab Access to CODIS



CFSO

*Consortium of Forensic
Science Organizations*

Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)

AAFS Update – 2025/2026



bitly