



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

Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Advancement Act Talking Points

REQUEST:

We urge you to support the reintroduction and passage of the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Advancement Act. This legislation: 1) establishes the national forensic science administrative structure, 2) establishes national forensic science standards, 3) mandates laboratory accreditation and practitioner certification, and 4) creates grant funding to support forensic science research and practice. This legislation is critical in providing the state, county, and local forensic service provider community representation within a Federally structured Office of Forensic Science (OFS) to ensure that any resulting federal budgets and nationally recommended standards, policies, and procedures most directly impacting the state, county, and local forensic service provider community and the judicial districts for which they serve are consistent with existing best practices and resource needs thereby insuring quality and timely results, along with advances in forensic science.

We urge the new legislation to:

Establish an Office of Forensic Science within the Office of the Deputy Attorney General in the Department of Justice to:

- Create a Forensic Science Board that will be comprised of a majority of members with extensive knowledge and practical experience in forensic science, pathology, and related scientific research.
- Promote and enforce existing international and national standards for existing accredited forensic service providers along with implementing and supporting accreditation for all forensic service providers including Federal, State, County, and Local.
- Evaluate existing, develop, and support the implementation of appropriate certification standards for all forensic service providers including Federal, State, County, and Local.
- Prioritize and promote forensic science research through strategic coordination of federal grant programs.
- Establish a repository for all current and future forensic research materials, which will be made available to interested parties.
- Codify and fund established Committees in NIST known as the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) to provide technical leadership to facilitate the development and promulgation of consensus-based documentary standards and guidelines for forensic science.
- Makes compulsory the MOU between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to ensure collaboration and coordination between DOJ and NIST on the OSAC.
- Ensure that practitioners at the federal, state, county, and local levels are accountable to an appropriate and enforceable code(s) of ethics.
- Establish a periodic needs assessment survey of the forensic science provider community to ensure the continued and appropriate delivery of reliable and quality forensic science services to the criminal justice system.