

Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Grants

Talking Points

ASKS:

Please add \$25m to the FY17 DOJ budget for the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Grant this year.

FACTS:

The FY17 Justice budget did not include funds for the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Grant.

The United States Congress funded the Paul Coverdell National Forensic Science Grant at \$13.5m for FY16.

Coverdell is pending authorization for \$25m a year in the Justice For All Act (NOTE keep an eye out for CFSO emails on the status of this).

Coverdell is the only federal forensic funding available to the forensic service provider community for disciplines other DNA to include controlled substances, toxicology, latent prints, firearms, and trace evidence.

Coverdell is the only federal forensic funding available to the nations medical examiners and coroners.

Funding for the forensic service provider community is not based on the needs and requirements of the community.

Issues in the community that can use this funding:

- Medical Examiner, Coroner Office, or Laboratory accreditation.
- Large retirements are looming in many disciplines and the only federal funds available for training are Coverdell funds.
- Heroin and fentanyl case submissions have increased dramatically. There is a significant increase in the use of synthetic cannabinoids and research chemicals that take much longer to analyze than routine drugs and the backlog is growing.
- There is an influx of Ambien type cases coming into the toxicology labs and current instrumentation cannot be used to identify this substance.
- States are cutting forensic training budgets as they struggle with larger budget issues.
- PROVIDE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES TO YOUR STATE