



*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*

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowery
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jose Serrano
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Cochran, Shelby, Culberson, Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Members Leahy, Shaheen, Lowey, and Serrano:

The undersigned organizations urge you to protect and sustain programs that are critical to the forensic sciences. As you know, there have been numerous studies and commissions over the last several years highlighting the critical needs in forensic science such as capacity building, research, accreditation, training, and education. We are quite concerned that another year will lapse without appropriate funding for our forensic science laboratories, medical examiners, and other critical practitioners in the forensics community. In particular, the opioid crisis has had a dramatic impact on our community creating further difficulties with processing evidence and conducting medicolegal death investigations.

We are therefore requesting that you fully support the authorized levels for the forensic science programs under the Justice For All Reauthorization Act of 2016 and the Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act, rather than the levels proposed by the Administration in the FY19 budget. Specifically:

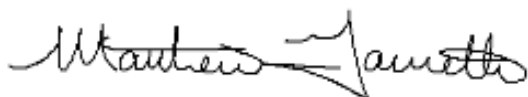
- \$19m for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant rather than the \$10m proposed in the budget.
- \$125m for the DNA Related and Forensic Programs Initiative as opposed to the \$97m as per the budget request.
- \$4m for the OSAC Forensic Initiative at NIST.

We also request that you insert report language allowing any federal opioid funding to be provided to the forensic science service providers within the state, local, and law enforcement community.

Currently we are not considered eligible for most of these opioid related funds. These funds are used by forensic science providers to support criminal investigation and prosecution, collect and disseminate data regarding drug trends for state and federal entities, and perform lab and autopsy services so that families of decedents can have closure with the death of a loved one.

All the granting programs are critical to the continued work of the forensic science community bringing quality science to the justice system and quality medical treatment for victims of crime.

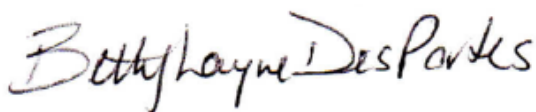
Thank you for your consideration and assistance. If you should have any questions or need information please contact Beth Lavach at 703-622-8752.



Matthew Gamette M.S., C.P.M.
Chair,
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations



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