



**CONSORTIUM OF FORENSIC SCIENCE
ORGANIZATIONS (CFSO)**

FLASH BRIEF

SUMMER 2016

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

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IMPORTANT NEWS

PCAST REPORT ON FORENSIC SCIENCE

CFSO has been engaging the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) at the White House for almost a year. OSTP is host to the President's Counsel of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). CFSO became aware that PCAST had an interest in forensic science when they asked current ASCLD President Jeremy Triplett to present to them in October 2015. CFSO requested a meeting with OSTP in late October 2015 and met with OSTP for the first time on December 9, 2015. Between the meeting request and the meeting, PCAST circulated a request for information from the forensic community by requesting information "from stakeholders on a series of questions related to forensic science." In brief, PCAST requested information on recent literature in several forensic disciplines. CFSO met with OSTP and expressed concern over the intent of the data collection and CFSO representatives were assured that the intent was to educate the PCAST and bolster a case for forensic science research in the United States. CFSO representatives presented at several PCAST meetings including the January 15, 2016 meeting. The transcript is available on the PCAST website [click here](#). The topic was discussed again at the July 13, 2016 PCAST meeting where they discussed the progress of a report they were writing regarding all of the 2000 plus articles PCAST was digesting in the fields of DNA, Firearms/Toolmarks, Latent Print Analysis, Shoe/Tire Analysis, and Bitemark Analysis. The transcript of this meeting is also available [click here](#). CFSO is aware that draft reports have been circulated within at least federal agencies at DOJ and NIST for comment and vetting. It has been communicated with CFSO that the tone of the report is very critical of at least some of the five disciplines being explored for the report and that some of the forensic disciplines will potentially be deemed "scientifically invalid." While OSTP has expressed to CFSO that the intent of the report is to justify more federal research funding

of forensic science disciplines, some reviewers have expressed concerns to CFSO over what they feel are technical issues or misunderstandings reflected in the report and some of the recommendations made. A vote was taken during the PCAST public meeting on September 1, 2016 and PCAST voted unanimously to accept the report recommendations and publish the report. We encourage all forensic science practitioners and stakeholders to become educated on this issue. CFSO and member organizations will issue formal responses to the PCAST report as soon as we have had a chance to digest the contents. We encourage individual practitioners and member organizations to respond to OSTP/PCAST directly and in other venues deemed appropriate by the individual or organization.

OSTP REPORT ON MEDICOLEGAL DEATH INVESTIGATION

CFSO met with OSTP staff on May 6, 2016 and communicated the following comments to the OSTP regarding the OSTP report on “Strengthening Medicolegal Death Investigation Systems”:

Suggestions for how the federal government could help the medicolegal death investigation systems:

- Provide loan forgiveness for medical students and residents who go into forensic pathology
- Increase federal funding for forensic pathology fellowships
- Provide financial support for offices seeking/achieving accreditation by increasing Coverdell grants
- Develop grants for financial support for construction and subsequent funding of regionalized medicolegal death investigation facilities – could be co-located in universities or medical centers or forensic science facilities (as long as administratively separate or if all under the administration of forensic pathology physician/laboratorian)
- Recognition of importance of board certification – of forensic pathologists by ABP and of MDIs by ABMDI – possibly with financial support for certification.
- Emphasize that toxicology is an important consideration in this process and medical examiners need access to affordable wide panel toxicology confirmations. Many states do not offer enough services in this area and medical examiners and coroners must either do without or outsource to costly private toxicology labs.
- Acknowledge that forensic pathology is medical care. The autopsy is the practice of medicine
- COMMIT TO ACTION ITEMS for the report to address key issues. Just studying the issue and pointing out the needs has been done before. We need an action plan by the federal government to address medicolegal death investigation system issues.

FORENSIC ADVANCEMENT LEGISLATION

CFSO worked with small groups from each member organization to separate the language in proposed legislation regarding an Office of Forensic Science at DOJ and the NIST OSACs due to sequential referral matters in the House. The NIST OSAC language has been agreed to by CFSO member organizations and was provided to the Hill. The legislative language essentially codifies the current OSAC structure while leaving room for the organization to grow and change as needed and as directed by NIST and the FSSB. The desire of CFSO (as expressed to Congress and NIST leadership) is to see NIST be the permanent host for OSAC with sustainable funding for successful operation.

In the Senate, the old Rockefeller Bill has been reintroduced by Senator Blumenthal. The CFSO is completing an edit of the legislation to provide to the Senate. A particular focus of this bill is the federal research agenda as it relates to forensic science. CFSO has been meeting extensively with federal officials, federal agencies, and Congress regarding a federal research strategy in forensic science.

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FORENSIC SCIENCE

CFSO members have attended every NCFS meeting on behalf of the forensic practitioner community. The National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS) will hold the 11th meeting at the NIST campus in Gaithersburg, MD September 12-13. It is important that you register by September 6th if you want to attend this meeting due to security restrictions at the NIST campus. [Click here to register](#). This NCFS meeting will have a panel discussion on what has become a very controversial topic regarding the technical merit evaluation of forensic science disciplines. There is one work product scheduled for a vote on this topic and there are five work products currently up for public comment in preparation for this meeting. The documents can be found here <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=DOJ-LA-2016-0018>

- [Views on Statistical Statements in Forensic Testimony](#)
- [Recommendation on Accreditation of Digital and Multimedia Forensic Science Service Providers](#)
- [Views on Recognizing the Autonomy and Neutrality of Forensic Pathologists](#)
- [Recommendation on Model Legislation for Medicolegal Death Investigation Systems](#)
- [Views on Use of Checklists in Forensic Science](#)

At the NCFS meetings on March 21st and 22nd, several work products were adopted by the commission which included the following topics:

- Proficiency testing
- Critical steps to accreditation
- Transparency of quality management systems
- Code of Professional Responsibility
- Identifying and evaluating literature that supports forensic science methods
- Research funding
- Use of term “reasonable scientific certainty”

At the NCFS meetings on June 20th and 21st, several work products were adopted by the commission which included the following topics:

- [Views Document on Technical Merit Evaluation of Forensic Science Methods and Practices](#)
- [Recommendation on National Disaster Call Center](#)
- [Views Document on Certification of Medicolegal Death Investigators](#)
- [Views Document on Accreditation of Medicolegal Death Investigation Offices](#)
- [Recommendation on Pretrial Discovery](#)
- [Views Document on Judicial Vouching](#)
- [Views Document on Notice and Demand Provisions](#)

Here is a link to all the NCFS work products:

<https://www.justice.gov/ncfs/work-products-adopted-commission>

Check the NCFS website for periodic updates of documents or register with federal register to receive notification.

ORGANIZATION OF SCIENTIFIC AREA COMMITTEES

The OSACs continue to meet on a regular basis and work hard on forensic science standards. The last physical meetings were staggered and took place throughout the summer in Phoenix, Arizona. It was a very busy time in Arizona for the OSAC with meetings of all the subcommittees, resource groups, and SACs. CFSO is heavily involved in the OSAC with many CFSO Board members and CFSO member organization members serving on the OSAC. Standards continue to move forward and it was amazing to see how hard each subcommittee is

working on forensic science standards and improvement documents. CFSO is carefully monitoring the progress of the standards and also the movements within NIST and OSAC. The FSSB recently hosted a strategic planning meeting for OSAC where members of many OSAC groups were invited to provide feedback. Out of this meeting came a number of recommendations for improvement. The FSSB is now determining which ones will be implemented and in what way they will be implemented. CFSO is represented heavily on the FSSB. CFSO Chair Matthew Gamette also met with NIST representatives over the summer to discuss the future of OSAC and the efforts of CFSO to support the OSAC. Also discussed was a proposal for a forensic literary search mechanism for practitioners to be able to access and how NIST may be able to assist. Discussions are ongoing on these topics with NIST leadership.

The process to develop standards and populate the Registry has been developed. Presently there are 3 standards at the FSSB level from the Seized Drugs and Materials (Trace) Subcommittees.

- *ASTM: E2330-12 Standard Test Method for Determination of Concentrations of Elements in Glass Samples Using Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) for Forensic Comparisons (for consideration as an OSAC Standard)*
- *ASTM: E2548-11e1 Standard Guide for Sampling Seized Drugs for Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis (for consideration as an OSAC Standard)*
- *ASTM: E2926-13 Standard Test Method for Forensic Comparison of Glass Using Micro X-ray Fluorescence (μ -XRF) Spectrometry (for consideration as an OSAC Standard)*

In addition, the public comments related to the following standards are in the process of being adjudicated:

- *ASTM: E2881-13e1 Standard Test Method for Extraction and Derivatization of Vegetable Oils and Fats from Fire Debris and Liquid Samples with Analysis by Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (for consideration as an OSAC Standard)*
- *ASTM: E1610-14 Standard Guide for Forensic Paint Analysis and Comparison (for consideration as an OSAC Guideline)*
- *ASTM: E2937-13 Standard Guide for Using Infrared Spectroscopy in Forensic Paint Examinations (for consideration as an OSAC Guideline)*
- *ASTM: E2388-11 Standard Guide for Minimum Training Requirements for Forensic Document Examiners (for consideration as an OSAC standard)*

Further, OSAC has published 22 research priorities, filled the crime scene subcommittee, worked out the process for multi-disciplinary standards, and will be filling vacancies this October as terms expire. OSAC is always accepting applications for affiliate members to help with task groups and other support.

For more details, please check out the OSAC Newsletter here:

<http://www.nist.gov/forensics/osac/osac-newsletter.cfm>

NIJ NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY SYMPOSIUM

CFSO has helped in the planning for a sexual assault conference that will be held in Washington D.C. in September (8-9). The conference will cover topics of policy, statute writing, laboratory analysis, law enforcement techniques and training, and many other topics. CFSO was interested in policy makers and advocates understanding the laboratory process, laboratory efficiencies, and also focusing some light on disciplines other than DNA that are critical in sexual assault examination. CFSO will be helping to facilitate the meeting and has played a large role in determining the attendees for the meeting. Space is still available in person and the event will be web broadcast. Learn more about the Symposium [HERE](#) and Register to Attend [HERE](#). The registration for the web presentation is [HERE](#).

VISITS TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

CFSO leadership has been in almost constant contact with the House Judiciary Committee regarding the Justice For All Act (JFAA). While Beth Lavach is in almost constant contact on our behalf, the CFSO Board of Director representatives have been very busy again this year. CFSO BOD members meet often in D.C. to lobby for member organizations. A list of in-person D.C. meetings with CFSO BOD members is listed below:

February—House CJS Approps, Senate Judiciary, Senator Cruz, Senator Wyden, Senator Shaheen

May—Senate Judiciary, Senator Cruz, Senator Leahy, Senator Cornyn, Senator Paul, Senator Hatch, Senator Lee, Senator Blumenthal, and meetings with NIJ, DOJ, and OSTP.

June—House Judiciary, Senator Cornyn, Senator Leahy, Senator Blumenthal, Senator Grassley, Senator Shaheen, Representative Labrador.

August—House Judiciary (x2), Speaker Ryan

A special thanks to members of all organizations that have made special efforts to make meetings in D.C. happen. We even had several organization representatives leave their national meetings for a day to fly in for a very important meeting in D.C. There have been great sacrifices by many! All the organizations have sent representatives and having the high level leadership of all the member organizations in D.C. for these meetings is always well received. Thank you! Please let us know if you have a Senator or Representative visit your lab or office. We can provide helpful information to make your visit an even bigger success.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION MEETING

Members of the CFSO Board helped in the planning, coordination, and delivery of the American Bar Association (ABA) Meeting at Fordham University School of Law in New York on June 3rd. The meeting included panels on DNA, fire investigation, digital evidence accreditation, and policy updates.

A DNA panel discussed statistics in the DNA discipline and commented that there are many different statistical methods available to the DNA community and while the yield different results, all are legitimate. Most labs are in the process of transitioning into probabilistic genotyping. It was presented that the prosecution and defense communities need to be more educated about probabilistic genotyping and the application of the likelihood ratio and how to make it the most informative to the court. The panel also advocated for “complexity thresholds” to ensure that the DNA community is not trying to do too much with low-level mixtures. There was also a discussion about the combined probability of inclusion and whether or not old cases need to be reviewed; the consensus was that if a lab was using the CPI appropriately with a stochastic threshold, there was nothing wrong with the use of that statistic.

A fire investigation panel discussed the differences between fire investigation (origin and cause) and arson investigation. “Cause” is a concept which include factors such as a competent ignition source, type and form of first fuel, and circumstances that brought them together. Investigation and lab analysis are completely separate and investigators lack fundamental scientific training. The panel discussed a need for training as fire investigators are becoming more scientists and engineers rather than “witch doctors.” They also discussed the sensitivity of the fire analysis getting better with new instrumentation. There is a question as to how low the testing should go since most of the world we live in has a background of petroleum based products.

NIST gave an update on the OSAC and encouraged the attorneys to use experts that subscribe to the forthcoming OSAC standards and guidelines. NIJ OIFS gave an update and described the NIJ’s mission focus on forensic science research and development. The NIJ has given \$825 million from 2009-2014 to 370,000 DNA cases and 157,000 CODIS hits. There have been 42,000 Cold case reviews and 2,000 CODIS uploads from cold cases.

Scientific publications from NIJ supported research has increased 300% and the presentations have increased 400%. This research must be guided by rigorous peer review. Over 200 research and development projects are in process currently at NIJ. Research takes 3-5 years to get to a publication. The Department of Justice's announcement concerning its request for public comment on the Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports (ULTRs) for seven forensic science disciplines coincided with this symposium. This is standard language for testimony and reports which have been in use for over a year by the FBI.

CFSO was very actively involved in organizing and presenting a panel on accreditation of digital labs. This panel was coordinated by ASCLD/CFSO and had three different practitioners representing an accredited digital forensic laboratory, a non-accredited federal laboratory, and a practitioner from a local non-accredited laboratory. The panel also had both forensic science accrediting bodies represented and Karin Athanas from A2LA spoke specifically about the accreditation process and how it has been and could be applied to a digital evidence laboratory. CFSO Chair Matthew Gamette organized and moderated this panel.

The presentation materials are available at the following link:

http://www.americanbar.org/groups/criminal_justice/events_cle/materials_forensics2016.html

The video of the panels can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwP7FgYL0jcvXnvmwXZs9LRYL7Q1eJFR>

FEDERAL BUDGET/APPROPRIATIONS

The Congress continues to move in the direction of a continuing resolution again. This means that things would be funded at the same levels as last year. This is disappointing in a number of ways because Congress was moving in a direction encouraged by CFSO to provide more funding to OSAC and Coverdell. At the end of this newsletter is the FY17 proposed budget outlining the funding in the House and the Senate. If we do see things moving in the direction of a budget, we will ask you to weigh in with your Congressman and ask for the House to support the Senate number. We are starting now to work on the next budget cycle for FY2018!!!

FEDERAL LEGISLATION UPDATE

Justice For All Act (JFAA)

Following a two-year effort in the United States Senate, the Justice For All Reauthorization Act (JFAA) of 2016 was unanimously passed in the Senate on June 16, 2016. However, as we write this, the bill is stuck in the House of Representatives. Unlike the Senate the House has a rule called CutGo. In short, CutGo means that spending must be paid for. For instance, since Coverdell has received \$13.5m in appropriation it can only be authorized at \$13.5m UNLESS there is an offset of funding from another part of the budget. There can be a waiver of this rule from leadership (Speaker Ryan and Majority Leader McCarthy), but there are very few instances of this. CFSO is working with the House on a daily basis to resolve this matter and we will be asking for your help very soon in a grass roots effort to ask leadership to suspend the CutGo rules for this bill. CFSO representatives have met extensively with House leadership on this bill and will continue these discussions until this bill gets finished.

We are pleased with the outcome of the Senate version of the bill. The Senate bill includes numerous sections in support of forensic practitioners. This legislation is an authorizing bill, which provides legal power for programs to exist and operate. Funding will still need to be appropriated during the appropriations process, but the levels in our key federal grant programs are raised in the Senate version. The highlights of this legislation specifically for forensic science (crime laboratories and medical examiners offices) are:

- **Re-authorizes the sexual assault kit backlog programs ensuring that:**
 - *75% of funds provided for grants must be used for "direct testing activities"*

- *Not less 5% shall be provided for grants for law enforcement agencies to conduct audits of their previously unsubmitted kits*
- **Provides grant funding for expansion and operation of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner programs in rural areas and to sustain or establish training programs**
- **Authorizes \$5m for DNA Research and Development for FY2017 to FY2021**
- **Authorizes \$10m for FBI DNA Programs for FY 2017 to FY2021**
- **Re-authorizes the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants:**
- **Provides funding for accreditation of laboratories and medical examiner offices**
- **Increases amount of formula grant to 85% from 75%**
- **Decreases discretionary (competitive) funds from 25% to 15%**
- **Increases minimum amount a grantee receives from 0.6% to 1%**
- **Adds language for purpose areas to allow funds to be used for impression evidence, digital evidence and medicolegal death investigators**
- **Adds language that funds can be used to “address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology (such as high throughput automation, statistical software, and new types of instrumentation)”**
- **Adds language to allow funds to be used to educate and train forensic pathologists**
- **Adds language for DOJ to work with states and local government to direct funding to medicolegal death investigation systems to facilitate accreditation of medical examiner and coroner offices and certification of medicolegal death investigators**
- **Increases Coverdell authorization to \$25m for FY 2017 to 2021**
- **Mandates a needs assessment of forensic laboratories not later than October 2018 to include:**
 - *An assessment of current workload, backlog, personnel, equipment*
 - *A review of all previous studies to include NAS, BJS and others*
- **Reauthorizes Post Conviction DNA Testing funds**
- **Reauthorizes Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Program for \$10m**
- **Establishes best practices for evidence retention and requires that they are published one year after passage of bill in consultation with Federal, state and local law enforcement and labs**
- **Requires audits of recipients of grants**

Action will be required on this bill very soon and you will be hearing from your member organization

Sexual Assault Survivor’s Act

The Sexual Assault Survivors Act was introduced by Senator Shaheen’s (D-NH) office. The Senator’s office reached out to the CFSO to work with them on this legislation to ensure its proper implementation in the forensic science community. CFSO has provided information to the Senator and requested that certain elements of the bill be reworked. This bill primarily deals with notifications and the length of time a lab must maintain the kit. It has been written to also serve as a model state law. Upon review of the draft we advocated that labs not be responsible for notifications to victims. We also advocated for language where states could implement destruction policies that were less than permanent retention (with the victim still having the right to petition that the kit not be destroyed). We provided comments and engaged in discussion during the drafting of this legislation. This legislation has passed in the Senate and now goes to the House for consideration. A link to the legislation is below. Here is what we fought the hardest for in this bill:

- **Modified notice section**
 - Made clear lab is not responsible for notification of victims
 - Notification would be made on written request of the victim/victim representative
 - Notice is only triggered if destruction would occur prior to maximum applicable statute of limitations (and the victim has requested notification in writing)

- If destruction occurs pursuant to maximum applicable statute of limitations, no notice requirement
- **Definition of survivor to include deceased victims (they were not willing to change the name of the bill so we added it in the definition section)**
- **Victim not having genetic information of suspect and vice versa**
- **Office of Justice Programs included in policy decisions to include the interests of practitioners**
- **Advocated for “other” governmental or nongovernmental agency participation (SANE nurses, lab directors, practitioners, etc.) on the working group and that the working group would also consult with stakeholders represented by CFSO.**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2566/text>

MEMBERS CORNER

American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)



Involving the AAFS Sections in the Standards Development Process

As you know, the AAFS has a Standards Developing Organization (SDO) called the AAFS Standards Board (ASB). We have established 13 Consensus Bodies so far – each focused upon a specific topic area. Some of these map directly to particular AAFS Sections, while some are cross-cutting (like Patterned Injury). An AAFS Section may cover more than one Consensus Body subject area, as well (such as Criminology)

We want to ensure that the AAFS Sections are able to actively participate in the development of documents by the ASB. These can be Standards, Technical Reports and Best Practice Recommendations. There are several ways that this can occur:

- 1) Each Consensus Body is establishing liaison relationships with organizations that have a direct interest in their work. Typically, there is a liaison with the relevant OSAC subcommittee, and with a relevant professional organization (such as the Society of Forensic Toxicologists). It would be quite beneficial if the AAFS Sections would appoint a liaison to the Consensus Bodies that it feels are working in their areas of interest. The liaison would participate in the meetings of the Consensus Body and report out developments in the AAFS Section to the Consensus Body. The liaison would also report back to the Section on actions by the Consensus Body. This can be of particular interest to the Section when a document is ready for public review. We encourage that the members of each Section look at the documents and provide feedback to the Consensus Body.
- 2) It is possible for the Section heads to be listed as ‘non-voting members’ of the Consensus Bodies. This is a mechanism by which the Section heads automatically receive notices of Consensus Body meetings and official actions. This would help us ensure that the AAFS membership is made aware of the ASB work.

The Consensus Bodies that we have established so far are:

- Anthropology
- Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
- Disaster Victim Identification
- DNA

- Dogs and Sensors
- Firearms and Toolmarks
- Footwear and Tire Tracks
- Forensic Document Examination
- Friction Ridge
- Medicolegal Death Investigation
- Patterned Injury
- Toxicology
- Wildlife Forensics

To get listed as a liaison to a Consensus Body or as a non-voting member, please send an e-mail to asb@aafs.org.

[American Board of Forensic Toxicology/Society of Forensic Toxicologists](#)



The Society of Forensic Toxicologists is hosting several professional development opportunities this year. The annual meeting will be in Dallas, TX, October 17-21. The Continuing Education Committee just hosted a “Forensic Toxicology Testimony” Workshop this May in Houston, TX. They will also be hosting a workshop this July in Dayton, OH on “The Pharmacology of Alcohol & Drugs of Abuse in Human Performance & Post Mortem Cases”. Check the SOFT website for the most current information www.soft-tox.org.

The National Safety Council Alcohol, Drugs, and Impairment Division will be surveying toxicology labs performing testing for impaired driving and fatal motor vehicle investigations. The survey will be used to inform the traffic safety community of the current state of capabilities and challenges faced by labs, and to update the published recommendations for this type of testing. If your lab does this work and is not contacted in June about the survey, please reach out to the committee at DUIDSurvey2016@gmail.com.

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



ASCLD currently administers the United States Technical Advisory Group (US TAG) to the ISO Technical Committee 272 that has been established to develop international standards for forensic science. Current draft work products include *Forensic science - Recognition, recording, collection, transport and storage of items for forensic analysis*, *Forensic Science Vocabulary*, and *Consumables for Use in the Recognition, recording, collection, transport and storage of items for forensic analysis*. The US TAG is also seeking additional organizational members. If your organization is interested in becoming a member to the US TAG and providing input to the development of international forensic science standards, please contact Kermit Channell at kermit.channell@crimelab.arkansas.gov.

ASCLD also holds the Presidency for the International Forensic Strategic Alliance. Members include ENSFI, AICEF, SMANZFUL, AFSN, and SARFS, along with their strategic partners Interpol

and the United Nations ODC. They have developed three documents called Minimum Requirements Documents for the *DNA Collection, Analysis, and Reporting, the Identification of Seized Drugs, and Crime Scene Investigation*. These documents provide the minimum quality, training, and operational requirements to provide a quality forensic work product to a criminal justice system. The documents were originally intended for developing countries, but the documents provide the foundation for any forensic service provider that is seeking to become accredited. They ensure that the FSSP builds the organizational infrastructure for a quality system and having properly trained personnel using sound scientific methods. These documents have been finalized and are currently in the process of being translated into French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese. A second set of MRDs are also in progress and are planned to be released by the end of 2016. They include the following forensic disciplines: latent prints, document examination, and digital evidence. (<http://www.ifsa-forensics.org/>)

Both ASCLD President Jeremy Triplett and IFSA President Jody Wolf will be attending the upcoming international symposiums being held in Auckland, New Zealand (2016 ANZFSS) and Lyon, France (2016 Forensic Managers Symposium held at Interpol) where they will be providing presentations and posters on both ASCLD, IFSA, and the IFSA MRDs.



[International Association of Forensic Nurses \(IAFN\)](#)



The International Association of Forensic Nurses has had a busy start to the 2016 year. Association leaders spend a day on the Hill voicing their support for the Justice for All Reauthorization Act (S.2577/H.R.4602) and the Sexual Assault Survivors' Rights Act (S.2566). Additionally, the organization came out in support of enhanced funding for VAWA FY2017, support for college campus survivors and, as a result of the Government Accountability Office Report on the availability of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, came out in strong support of the Survivors' Access to Supportive Care Act. More information can be found at the Government Affairs Committee section of the website <http://www.forensicnurses.org/?page=GovernmentAffairs>. The International Conference on Forensic Science and Practice is scheduled for Denver September 29 through October 3rd. Please join us! More information can be found at <http://www.forensicnurses.org/?page=AnnualConfer>.

[International Association of Identification \(IAI\)](#)



The International Association for Identification is a professional membership organization comprised of individuals worldwide who work in the field of forensic identification. With over 7,500 members from 77 countries, the IAI remains the oldest and largest forensic science/identification association in the world. Forensic education is one of the IAI's primary missions. The IAI strives to be among the leaders in providing training for those engaged in forensic identification, investigation, and scientific examination of physical evidence. The 2016 Annual IAI International Forensic Educational Conference was held on August 7-13, 2016 in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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



The NAME accreditation program accredits medical examiner, coroner, and autopsy services that provide medicolegal death investigation expertise to approximately 1/3 of the United States population. Currently, almost 130 million people live in jurisdictions covered by a NAME accredited office, with new offices applying at an ever increasing rate. Very soon, NAME will offer the opportunity for offices to get ISO accreditation in addition to the NAME accreditation. ISO accreditation has been offered to crime laboratories for some time and many have achieved this level of accreditation. NAME will have training in the ISO process for its inspectors at the NAME annual meeting September 2016 in Minneapolis, MN.

The NAME Foundation is a nonprofit charitable corporation established in 1996. It is organized and operated exclusively for public charitable, educational, and scientific uses and purposes. The overall goals of the Foundation are to advocate for the profession of Forensic Pathology by promoting education and research. Over the years, the Foundation has, through the generous donation of its members, built a fund of more than \$300,000. The active NAME Foundation hopes to substantially build its financial resources and continue to actively promote and advance forensic pathology.

The upcoming NAME 2016 Annual Meeting will be September 9-13, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis in Minneapolis, MN. This meeting will be the 50th Anniversary Meeting!

Federal Proposed FY2017 Budget

HOUSE

SENATE

NIST

NIST

Standards Coordination and Special Programs.—The recommendation includes \$55,000,000 for standards coordination and special programs. Within these amounts, up to \$5,000,000 is included to maintain NIST’s current forensic research and standards work. The recommendation does not include funds to support or operate Forensic Science Advisory Committees.

Forensic Science.—The Committee provides no less than the fiscal year 2016 enacted level for the Forensic Science Center of Excellence. The Committee recommends that NIST continue to work in concert with statisticians and researchers in related scientific fields to bring additional scientific resources and expertise to the practice and application of forensic science. Additionally, within funds provided, NIST is encouraged to work with the forensic science community to establish developmental validation standards for forensic science test methodologies.

NIST budget structure.—The Committee encourages NIST to work to bring greater transparency into its budget structure and provide additional detail in its budget justifications about base lab- oratory funding, rather than just program changes and new initiatives.

DOJ

DOJ

Forensics.—The recommendation does not include funding for the forensics initiative. The Committee is concerned that the Administration’s forensic sciences initiative lacks the involvement of the State and local practitioner community, making the community an observer—not a participant—in addressing forensic reform, and thereby running the risk that the initiative will not take into consideration existing, proven standards and processes used within the community. This matter is also addressed elsewhere in the report.

Forensic Initiative.—The Committee provides \$5,000,000 for a forensic initiative, of which \$4,000,000 is provided by transfer to the National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST] to support Scientific Working Groups. The Department of Justice shall coordinate its forensic initiative activities with NIST.

Competitive grants.—The Committee urges the Department to prioritize improving forensic interview training for child abuse investigation and prosecution professionals.

Forensics training.—The Committee is aware of a number of programs surrounding trafficking offenses, sex crimes and domestic violence that provide similar support to State and local law enforcement and prosecutors. The Committee encourages OJP to increase efforts to provide State and local prosecutors with training, particularly train the trainer, and trial experience in cybercrimes and digital evidence.

The Committee is also encouraged by efforts to expand the ability of academic forensic technology programs to assist the Department in identifying and profiling online crime, hate and terror groups.

DNA initiative.—The recommendation includes \$125,000,000 for DNA-related and forensic programs and activities, an increase of \$20,000,000 above the request and the same as the fiscal year 2016 level. Within the funds provided, the Committee provides \$4,000,000 each for Post-Conviction DNA Testing grants and Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program grants. The Committee expects that OJP will make funding for DNA analysis and capacity enhancement a priority to meet the purposes of the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program. The Committee directs the Department to submit, as part of its spending plan, a plan for the use of all funds appropriated for DNA-related and forensic programs and a report on the alignment of appropriated funds with the authorized purposes of the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program

Training for Forensic Services.—The Committee is interested in solution-based approaches to train local law enforcement officers and utilize available technology to reduce court backlogs and prosecutions. To the extent appropriate, OJP should explore ways to provide resources for multi-jurisdictional forensic service providers, in collaboration with universities, to provide access to forensic expertise, assistance, and continuing education to law enforcement agencies. The Committee encourages OJP to remind awardees that these objectives could be met through the Byrne-JAG program.

DNA Backlog and Crime Lab Improvements.—The Committee is once again extremely disappointed that the Department's budget request slashes funding by \$20,000,000 for critical grant programs to help State and local agencies address their backlogs and test forensic evidence. The Committee continues its strong support for DNA backlog and crime lab improvements by recommending \$125,000,000 to strengthen and improve Federal and State DNA collection and analysis systems that can be used to accelerate the prosecution of the guilty while simultaneously protecting the innocent from wrongful prosecution. Within funds provided, \$117,000,000 is for Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Reduction grants, \$4,000,000 is for Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing grants, and \$4,000,000 is for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners grants.

From within the funding provided for Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Reduction grants, the Committee expects the department to prioritize reducing rape kit backlogs, given that It IS the primary reason why the Committee continues to provide robust funding for these grants. The Committee directs the Department to provide not less than 75 percent of the total grant amounts for direct testing activities to reduce the backlog. The Committee further directs DOJ to provide at least 5

	<p>percent of funds to law enforcement agencies to conduct audits of their backlogged rape kits and to prioritize testing in those cases in which the statute of limitations will soon expire, as authorized by the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2013 (Public Law 113--4).</p> <p>The Committee expects that the OJP will make funding for DNA analysis and capacity enhancement a priority in order to meet the purposes of the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program. The Committee directs the Department to submit to the Committee as part of its spending plan for State and Local Law Enforcement Activities a plan with respect to funds appropriated for DNA-related and forensic programs, including the alignment of appropriated funds with the authorized purposes of the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program.</p>
<p><i>Sexual assault kit backlog grants.</i>—The recommendation includes \$45,000,000 for grants to address the sexual assault kit (SAK) backlog. The Committee encourages stakeholders and local law enforcement to continue working with Federal law enforcement to re- solve this important issue. The Committee also encourages OJP to increase its efforts to ensure that strong research and program evaluations are undertaken utilizing independent evaluators with the experience and skills to provide necessary feedback and im- prove the efficiency of SAK processing.</p>	<p><i>Reducing the Rape Kit Backlog.</i> -The Committee's recommendation includes \$45,000,000 to continue a competitive grant program started in fiscal year 2015 as part of the initiative to reduce the backlog of rape kits at law enforcement agencies. The NIJ shall provide competitively awarded grants with a comprehensive com- munity-based approach to addressing the resolution of cases in the backlog. The Committee directs the NIJ to provide a report not later than 90 days after enactment of this act on its progress in developing a strategy and model to serve as best practices for discovering and testing kits, training law enforcement, and supporting victims throughout the process as required by Public Law 113-235.</p>

Program	Budget Request FY17	House	Senate
Paul Coverdell Forensic Science	0	0	\$13.5
DNA Initiative	\$	\$125	\$125
Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grants		\$117	\$117
Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grants		\$4	\$4
Sex Assault Exam Kits		\$4	\$4
Community Based Sexual Assault Response Reform		\$45	\$45