CONSORTIUM OF FORENSIC SCIENCE ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LAB DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING
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Who is the CFSO?
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations

- Formed in 1999 at the request of Policy Makers to speak with one voice on forensic science policy matters
- Current Membership:
  - National Association of Medical Examiners
  - American Academy of Forensic Science
  - American Society of Crime Lab Directors
  - American Society of Crime Lab Directors Accreditation Board
  - International Association for Identification
  - Society of Forensic Toxicologists
  - American Board of Toxicologists
What Does CFSO Do and Why Should the Federal Government Care?

- Advocate and Educate
- Why should the federal government be involved in matters of the State for law enforcement?
  - Databases
  - Crime knows no borders
  - Continuity of operations and consistent high quality is critical
What are the issues for 2013? What has been accomplished?

Policy and Funding!

- Forensic Science actually accomplished a lot in 2012/13
  - VAWA
  - SAFER
  - JFA reintroduced as bipartisan bill
- Issues remain and are important and require continued participation from the community.
FY14 BUDGET-Washington has to RUSH!

FY14 budget delivered in April not February

House deliberates on the budget and adds or subtracts programs

Senate deliberates on the budget

Reconciliation between House and Senate ...... September 30? CR?

LAW!
FY14 Proposed Budget Information: What does this mean to Forensics?

Coverdell:

- **FY13 $12m**
- **FY14 $0**

DNA

- **FY13 $113**
- **FY14 $91**

Byrne Competitive

- **FY13 $14m**
- **FY14 $14m**

Forensic Initiative

- $9m ($1m for a Forensic Science Advisory Committee, $3m for NIST to create standards, $5m NSF to create Research Centers)

NIST Budget: $5m standards and research
Forensic Policy: The SAFER ACT

- Original bill was deemed problematic from an operational perspective by ASCLD.
  - 75% of all Debbie Smith Act grant appropriations to analyze untested crime scene DNA evidence, analyze offender samples, and to expand the capacity of labs to test that evidence.
  - No more than 7% be spent on audits.
  - Administrative duties will not be passed down to the lab system.
  - Prevents personal information about victims from being published in public reports.
  - Creates new standards for DNA collection
Forensic Policy: JUSTICE FOR ALL

- Authorizes DNA grant programs and Coverdell for FY 2014 to 2018
- **FUNDING:**
  - **Increases:**
    - Crime Victims Legal Assistance Grants
    - Incentive Grants to States for claims of innocence $5m to $10m
  - **Decreases:**
    - Training and Education for Law Enforcement from $12.5m to $5m
    - Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program from $30m to $15m
    - DNA Research and Development from $15m to $5m
    - FBI DNA Programs $42m to 10m
    - Coverdell $35m to $25m
- **BEST PRACTICES**
  - Establishes best practices for evidence retention with NIJ
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**
  - Audits a determined number of grantees and provides mandatory exclusion specifics
Policy: Forensic Reform/Advancements

- **Leahy Bill**
  - With the end of the last Congress the legislation died
  - Legislation will be reintroduced with changes in the next few weeks
  - Republican support will be needed but there is a new precedent of the parties working together (SAFER/JFA/VAWA)
Legislative Process: Points to influence!

- Formulation of Ideas for legislation and Introduction of legislation
- Committee action (may be more than one Committee):
  - Debate with amendments
  - Passage or NOT
- Floor action:
  - Debate with amendments
  - Passage or NOT
- Referral to other legislative body
- Reconciliation of differences and votes on final bill
Why would Congress care? How do I work with them?

- They do care! These issues affect their constituents-voters.
- Provide an education
  - What are the issues that affect the nation’s medical examiners?
  - How does it affect their State or district?
  - Provide specific examples and discuss how those problems could be resolved if the Federal government was involved.
  - Media pressures.
- ASCLD Advocacy Committee
CFSO Website

www.thecfso.org