



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY DIRECTORS, INC.

65 Glen Road, Suite 123, Garner, NC 27529

March 28, 2018

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ASCLD Position Statement

The American Society of Crime Lab Directors (ASCLD) is comprised of over 600 leaders in forensic science. ASCLD strongly supports that any Board, Committee or Commission responsible for oversight of forensic science laboratories and/or forensic analyses be comprised of a significant number of individuals with active crime laboratory experience.

Forensic science leaders have substantial science backgrounds, many with advanced and terminal-level degrees. This formal education is strengthened by years of practical training and experience gained by working within accredited crime labs, applying and developing sound scientific procedures, validating new technologies, applying scientific principles to criminal cases, auditing crime laboratories, and testifying in court as subject matter experts. This wealth of practical experience provided by experienced forensic science leaders is beneficial to Commissions and oversight Boards as they provide critical insight to crime lab management, quality assurance, and compliance to applicable standards and scientific principles and methodology.

In ASCLD's 2017-2018 National Outreach Priorities and Agenda, we stated the following:

“ASCLD supports national initiatives to coordinate and sustain efforts to strengthen and advance the forensic science profession including: Leadership with practical forensic science experience, fundamental scientific education, and crime laboratory leadership.”

With respect to Massachusetts Senate Bill 2173 (Section 9) ASCLD recommends a careful review of the proposed oversight board in Massachusetts to determine the appropriate structure and composition. Experience has demonstrated that the most effective state level commissions and oversight committees are comprised of a collaborative working group which includes forensic science technical experts. ASCLD further recommends, at a minimum, Commission representation from Lab Directors of all levels of crime laboratories in Massachusetts (state, county, city/municipality).

Commissions and Boards on Forensic Science, as with any Board that provides oversight for a highly technical area, require experience and expertise to provide proper guidance. Commissioners with a broad level of knowledge in various forensic scientific disciplines and from accredited laboratories serving different levels of government, including federal, state and local jurisdictions provide value. Therefore, to provide appropriate levels of oversight, such commissions and oversight committees must be comprised of commissioners with appropriate and current forensic experience.