

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen:

We write to express our strong support for the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, which helps law enforcement and forensic labs keep up with the increasing demand for DNA analysis. We request that you provide sufficient funding in FY 2019 for vital DNA-related and forensic programs, including the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, the Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Program, and Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program Grants.

Since the program was first authorized in 2004, the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program has given states the help and resources they desperately need, and continue to need, to carry out DNA analyses of backlogged evidence, particularly rape kits. Since 2005, the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program has enabled state and local crime laboratories to process more than 725,000 cases and upload over 327,000 DNA profiles to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), accounting for 40 percent of all forensic profiles in this system. During this time, Debbie Smith DNA Grants were also responsible for 41 percent of all matches made in the CODIS system.

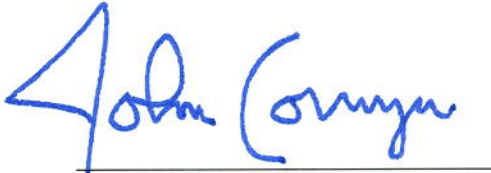
This funding has provided a strong starting point in addressing this serious problem, but much more work still remains to be done before we clear the national backlog of untested DNA crime scene evidence and offender profiles.

Unfortunately, forensic DNA is a victim of its own success - as more cases are solved using DNA, law enforcement has asked for even more DNA testing in more cases. Any decrease in this vital funding for forensic DNA analysis will lead to considerable strain on crime labs as backlogs will grow to unprecedented levels, with impacts that will resound throughout the criminal justice system.

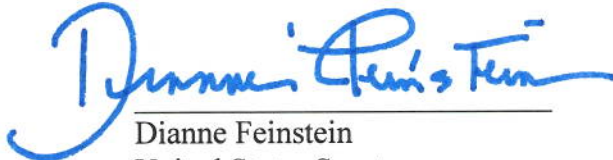
Your subcommittee has long recognized the importance of the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program, and the funding you have appropriated has aided thousands of cases and had a tremendously positive effect on public safety. We strongly urge you to provide sufficient funding for these critical programs.

Thank you for your attention to this important request. We appreciate your commitment to continued funding to protect crime victims and maximize the use of DNA to solve and prevent violent crime.

Sincerely,



John Cornyn  
United States Senator




Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Thom Tillis  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Dean Heller  
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Mike Crapo  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



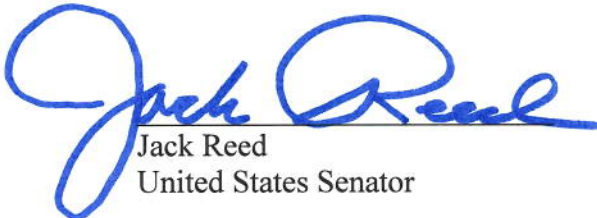
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

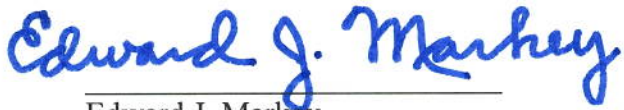


Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

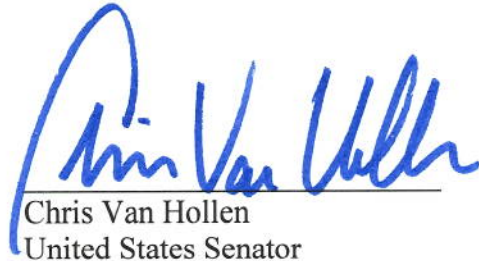


Jack Reed  
United States Senator





Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



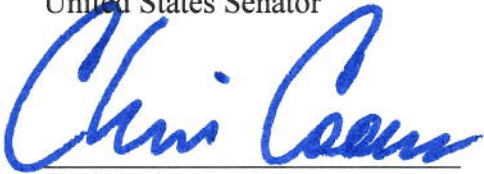
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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Tina Smith  
United States Senator



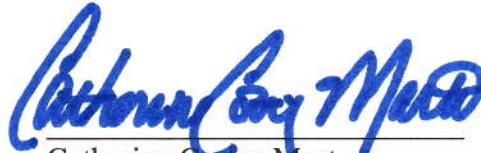
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United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Bill Nelson  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

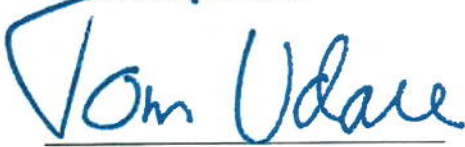
  
Joe Donnelly  
United States Senator

  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator


  
Jon Tester  
United States Senator

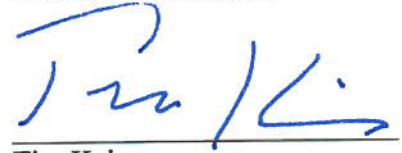
  
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United States Senator

  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

  
Tom Udall  
United States Senator

  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

  
Cory Booker  
United States Senator

  
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations