



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIME LABORATORY DIRECTORS LABORATORY ACCREDITATION BOARD

January 27, 2014

Comments to the National Commission on Forensic Science

To: Deputy Attorney General James M. Cole, Co-Chair
Under Secretary of Commerce and NIST Director Patrick D. Gallagher, Co-Chair
Deputy Assistant Administrator for DEA Nelson Santos, Vice-Chair
Special Assistant to the NIST Director John M. Butler, Vice-Chair

And All Honorable and Distinguished Members of the Commission:

The Board of Directors and other top management of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors / Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB) share a common goal with the National Commission on Forensic Science (NCFS). Since the early 1980's, ASCLD/LAB has been continuously committed to enhancing the quality of forensic science services in the United States, and we take this opportunity to welcome the commissioners of the NCFS as new partners in pursuing that common goal.

As the oldest and most established forensic science accrediting body in the United States, ASCLD/LAB knows the challenges and rewards with assessing and accrediting forensic science units in this and other countries. The management of ASCLD/LAB recognizes that opportunities exist now and will always exist for continued changes designed and intended to improve the delivery of forensic science in the United States. We support all efforts intended to reach that common goal.

As the public, the forensic science community and all interested parties watch the launching of the activities of the NCFS, the management of ASCLD/LAB takes this opportunity to wish you success. ASCLD/LAB urges the NCFS to stay true to its intended purpose of "*recommending strategies for enhancing quality assurance in forensic science units.*" We applaud the fact that forensic practitioners were included as members of the NCFS and we readily recognize the value and point-of-view that each member of the diverse commission brings to the table. As the NCFS goes about its work, we stress the importance of appropriate public comment periods and, especially, that a deliberate effort be made to ensure that all forensic science practitioners are afforded an opportunity to be heard.


ASCLD/LAB represents over four hundred (400) individual crime laboratories - including federal, state, local, private and international entities. Those four hundred laboratories represent over ten-thousand (10,000) practicing forensic scientists and practitioners. While the public's attention is often drawn to isolated instances of wrong doing in forensic science, ASCLD/LAB testifies to the fact that nearly all of the many thousands of forensic science practitioners in this country are hard at work each day, committed to doing the right thing for the right reasons. To aid in this daily effort, ASCLD/LAB long ago recognized the importance of and published the *ASCLD/LAB Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Crime Laboratories and Forensic Scientists*. We hold these guiding principles up as a model code of ethics for the forensic community

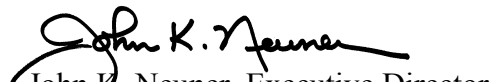
at large.

On behalf of the many dedicated men and women practicing forensic science in the United States, ASCLD/LAB supports all efforts intended to enhance the delivery of forensic science, including the work of the NCFS. As the NCFS reaches conclusions and makes recommendations, we encourage the NCFS and the Attorney General to work with Congress to ensure adequate and sustainable funding to implement any nationwide standards developed.

As partners with a shared goal, the ASCLD/LAB Board of Directors and top management of ASCLD/LAB stand ready to provide feedback, comments or any input which may assist the NCFS in completing its work.

Respectfully submitted by,


Renee Romero, Chair
ASCLD/LAB Board of Directors


John K. Neuner, Executive Director
ASCLD/LAB