
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO ESTABLISH A
WORKING GROUP TO STUDY FORENSIC LABORATORIES IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, forensic science is the process of using science
2 to resolve legal issues; and
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4 WHEREAS, forensic science may involve the application of
5 various fields of science, including anthropology, biology,
6 chemistry, engineering, genetics, medicine, pathology, voice
7 analysis, psychiatry, and toxicology to matters involving law
8 enforcement; and
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10 WHEREAS, the Honolulu Police Department's Scientific
11 Investigation Section includes the only full-service forensic
12 laboratory in the State; and
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14 WHEREAS, the Scientific Investigation Section's forensic
15 laboratory is commonly referred to as the "crime lab"; and
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17 WHEREAS, other law enforcement agencies in the State have
18 more limited facilities and trained staff available for the
19 application of forensic science; and
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21 WHEREAS, there may be opportunities to improve the
22 application of forensic science for law enforcement purposes in
23 the State; now, therefore,
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25 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
26 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the
27 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of the
28 Attorney General is requested to establish a working group to
29 study forensic laboratories in the State; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
32 to include representatives from the Federal Bureau of



1 Investigation, the Department of Public Safety, the Judiciary,
2 the police department of each county, the office of the
3 prosecutor of each county, the Office of the Public Defender,
4 criminal defense attorneys, the Hawaii State Bar Association,
5 the American Civil Liberties Union, state legislators, and a
6 professor of forensic science from Chaminade University; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
9 to study the capabilities, staffing levels, caseloads, and task
10 completion times of forensic laboratories in the State; and
11 accreditation requirements and other issues related to the
12 operation of forensic laboratories; and
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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
15 to specifically analyze the following issues:
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- 17 (1) The number of forensic tests conducted annually by the
18 Honolulu Police Department and other crime
19 laboratories in this State;
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- 21 (2) The sources of requests to the Honolulu Police
22 Department and other crimes laboratories in this State
23 for forensic testing;
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- 25 (3) The number of requests to the Honolulu Police
26 Department and other crime laboratories in this State
27 from state agencies for forensic testing;
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- 29 (4) Methods by which the Honolulu Police Department sends
30 evidence to other states for forensic testing;
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- 32 (5) The number of times each year that the Honolulu Police
33 Department sends evidence to other states for forensic
34 testing;
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- 36 (6) The costs for forensic testing that is conducted in
37 other states for the Honolulu Police Department;
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- 39 (7) Additional costs related to forensic testing,
40 including costs for experts from other states to
41 travel to this State to testify as prosecution
42 witnesses;



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- 2 (8) Any projected increases in costs for forensic testing
- 3 in this State;
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- 5 (9) The sources of funding for DNA testing of felons who
- 6 are convicted in this State; and
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- 8 (10) The sources of funding for equipping and operating
- 9 forensic laboratories in this State and in other
- 10 states; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
 13 to provide an interim report, including any findings,
 14 recommendations, and proposed legislation, through the Attorney
 15 General, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
 16 the convening of the Regular Session of 2018; and

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 18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested
 19 to provide a final report, including any findings,
 20 recommendations, and proposed legislation, through the Attorney
 21 General, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
 22 the convening of the Regular Session of 2019; and

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 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 25 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Attorney General,
 26 the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Public
 27 Safety, the Judiciary, the police department of each county, the
 28 office of the prosecutor of each county, the Office of the
 29 Public Defender, the Hawaii State Bar Association, the American
 30 Civil Liberties Union, and Chaminade University.

