

Reps. Vagnozzi, Constan, Meadows, Alma Smith, LeBlanc, Coulouris, Bieda, Accavitti, Bauer, Byrnes, Clack, Condino, Cushingberry, Dean, Gillard, Gonzales, Hammel, Johnson, Rick Jones, Robert Jones, Kathleen Law, McDowell, Polidori, Spade, Hammon, Lemmons, Melton and Sak offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 281.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to reauthorize the DNA backlog program.

Whereas, The Debbie Smith DNA backlog grant program was part of the Justice for All Act of 2004, Public Law No. 108-405. This legislation assists in the reduction of DNA backlogs and improvement of the utilization of DNA in the criminal justice system in the state of Michigan and every state throughout the nation; and

Whereas, DNA technology is increasingly vital to ensuring accuracy and fairness in the criminal justice system. Thousands of law enforcement investigations have been aided nationwide because of DNA matches made through the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), bringing justice to victims and removing criminals from the streets. Also, the Innocence Project has used DNA in over 200 cases to exonerate persons who were wrongfully convicted of crimes; and

Whereas, The state of Michigan and other states throughout the nation have significantly expanded their DNA programs to include a growing number of convicted or arrested felons to match against unsolved crimes; and

Whereas, The demand for DNA testing in both violent and nonviolent crimes has continued to increase as the reliability of this evidence is proven. Many laboratories still maintain DNA backlogs of six months or longer and are unable to meet the growing demand for DNA testing despite funding commitments from state and local governments; and

Whereas, The Debbie Smith DNA backlog grant program has permitted state and local governments an opportunity to begin to maximize the full potential of forensic DNA through backlog reduction, but much work remains to be done; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to reauthorize the DNA backlog program; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.