



# NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

## THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S PROSECUTORS

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## Debbie Smith Act & Justice Served Act Overview

### *Essential Items*

1. Congress should prioritize **reauthorizing the Debbie Smith Act with minimal changes** during the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.
2. Appropriators must **ensure that 5 to 7 percent of funding** in Debbie Smith goes to prosecutors' offices to address the backlog of violent crime cases.

### *History*

- The Debbie Smith Act was originally signed into law in 2004. Through grant programs, the Act provides state and local crime labs & prosecutors' offices resources to end the backlog of untested DNA evidence. Named for survivor Debbie Smith, the Act has been effective in assisting investigations into both violent and non-violent crime. The Justice Served Act, signed into law last Congress, establishes a new purpose area in the Debbie Smith Act for prosecution offices attempting to address the backlog of violent crime cases.

### *The Debbie Smith Act*

- Creates a formula grant program with 9 purpose areas to provide funding for crime labs and state & local prosecution offices to address the backlog of DNA evidence.
- Improves DNA training and education for law enforcement, correctional personnel, and officers of the court.
- The Act has resulted in more than **860,000 DNA cases processed** with **over 376,000 DNA profiles** uploaded to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), accounting for **43 percent** of all forensic profiles.<sup>1</sup>
- There are more than **13 million offender samples** in CODIS, and **41 percent of the matches** made within the system are from results of testing funded by DSA grants.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Justice Served Act*

Authorizes a carve-out of 5 to 7 percent of funding from the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Elimination Act to enhance capacity of state and local prosecution offices to address the backlog of violent crime cases.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cornyn.senate.gov/content/news/cornyn-feinstein-introduce-bill-reauthorize-debbie-smith-act-help-fight-rape-kit>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=7663A653-11F4-47C4-83C5-1A3486C0804F>.