



H.R. 5057 – Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act of 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 5057 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) on January 17, 2008. The House Committee on the Judiciary ordered the bill to be ordered, as amended, by voice vote on June 11, 2008.

H.R. 5057 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 15, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.R. 5057 amends the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-546) to reauthorize appropriations for the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program through 2014.

The bill authorizes the Department of Justice to award matching grants to states that establish funding mechanisms for eliminating backlogs in DNA sample processing, and establishes certain requirements regarding the collection of DNA samples from persons arrested on suspicion of specific crimes and convicted felons.

H.R. 5057 authorizes \$151 million in fiscal year 2009, and \$200 million per year over the period 2010 through 2014 for the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program.

The bill offers States incentives to collect DNA samples from individuals arrested for or charged with murder and sex crimes. Funding for States with such enhanced DNA collection processes will be increased by 10 percent under this provision. H.R. 5057 authorizes such appropriations as may be necessary for this program.

The bill also authorizes \$50 million annually over the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 for grants to States and local governments to purchase forensic DNA technology. H.R. 5057 authorizes \$2 million for a National Academy of Sciences study regarding how to eliminate backlogs in DNA processing systems.

BACKGROUND

The DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 was enacted on December 19, 2000. This legislation allows States to carry out DNA analyses for use in the FBI's Combined DNA Index System and to collect and analyze DNA samples.

The Debbie Smith Grant Program allows the Attorney General to award grants to States and local governments to carry out DNA analyses, increase the capacity of State and local DNA laboratories, and to ensure that DNA tests and analyses are carried out in a timely manner. Under current law, the Attorney General is required to submit reports to Congress summarizing the grants made for this purpose each fiscal year. The program is currently authorized at \$151 million annually for both years 2008 and 2009.

The program is named after Debbie Smith, a woman who was robbed and raped in 1989 near her home in Williamsburg, Virginia. In 1995, DNA samples extracted from Smith's rape kit identified a man incarcerated in a Virginia prison for another crime as the perpetrator.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that "assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, implementing H.R. 5057 would cost about \$875 million over the 2009-2013 period".



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

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[Full CBO Cost Estimate](#)

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