
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8017

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2003 Regular Session

By Senators Kohl-Welles, Thibaudeau, Regala and Kline

Read first time 02/19/2003. Referred to Committee on Judiciary.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
5 STATE LEGISLATURES, AND TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, The ability of law enforcement officials to utilize
10 forensic evidence is often central to their capacity to process crime
11 scenes and gather objective evidence that may identify individuals who
12 may have information regarding a crime; and

13 WHEREAS, Advances in forensic evidence gathering and analysis
14 provide law enforcement and prosecutorial professionals with the
15 greater ability to identify and prosecute persons who commit crimes and
16 to reduce the likelihood of wrongful prosecutions; and

17 WHEREAS, Crimes of violence may be, and often are, committed by the
18 same person and often in more than one state; and

19 WHEREAS, The need and ability to quickly and accurately obtain and

1 share forensic information can benefit the public and public safety
2 professionals across jurisdictional boundaries; and

3 WHEREAS, There is significant evidence that in many instances the
4 retrieval and analysis of ammunition shells and casings can be a
5 valuable forensic tool in helping identify a weapon that has been used
6 in more than one crime; and

7 WHEREAS, The ability of a single state to establish, maintain,
8 utilize, and share information on this type of forensic evidence is
9 constrained by costs and staffing so as to cause practical difficulties
10 in establishing and using a data base of this forensic evidence; and

11 WHEREAS, The ability to quickly access and analyze the forensic
12 evidence in violent crimes is more likely to occur when there is a
13 common data base to use;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Congress
15 enact a national data base of forensic evidence relating to
16 identification of ammunition used in the commission of crimes.
17 Specifically, access to the data base should be restricted to public
18 safety professionals investigating and prosecuting crimes and counsel
19 for persons accused of committing crimes; and

20 Your Memorialists further pray that Congress permit the
21 establishment of a national data base that utilizes only ammunition
22 identification and analysis that are objectively demonstrated to be
23 highly reliable and that Congress require regular peer review of
24 techniques utilized and developed to maintain the highest possible
25 reliability of the methods utilized in maintaining the evidence
26 contained in the data base; and

27 Your Memorialists further pray that Congress undertake the
28 establishment of the data base as promptly as possible in order to
29 provide maximum assistance to public safety professionals in their
30 efforts to solve and prevent crimes, and that the establishment of the
31 data base include an independent review board to maintain the integrity
32 of the restrictions on the use of the data as well as reviewing
33 proposed new techniques of analysis.

34 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
35 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
36 States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National
37 Governors Association, the President of the United States Senate, the

1 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress
2 from the State of Washington.

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