

PRESS RELEASE
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FROM: CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE FAIR
ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

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**CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE FAIR ADMINISTRATION OF
JUSTICE ISSUES EMERGENCY REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
REGARDING DNA TESTING BACKLOGS.**

The California Commission on the Fair Administration of Justice, created by the California State Senate to examine the causes of wrongful convictions and make recommendations and proposals to further insure that the administration of criminal justice in California is just, fair and accurate, released an emergency report and recommendations today, addressing the problem of DNA testing backlogs in California. The report recommends that emergency budget appropriations be introduced to increase salary levels in the State Laboratory responsible for processing DNA samples collected pursuant to California Proposition 69, which mandates taking buccal DNA samples from arrestees. The report attributes backlogs in the processing of samples to the laboratory's inability to compete with other California laboratories for the hiring of criminalists. The report also urges Attorney General Jerry Brown to consult with a broad array of criminal justice professionals to identify and recommend the steps that must be taken to insure timely processing of forensic evidence.

The Commission recommendations gained the unanimous support of all twenty members of the Commission. The Commission is chaired by former California Attorney General John Van de Kamp, and includes a broad spectrum of prosecution, defense, police and victim representatives.

The Commission's recommendations were based upon testimony presented at a public hearing convened in Sacramento on January 10, 2007 to hear the

testimony of experts, victims, and representatives of police, prosecutor and criminal defense agencies.

The Commission will continue its deliberations, addressing other issues related to the availability of reliable forensic evidence, as well as issues related to prosecutorial misconduct, defense lawyer incompetence, remedies for wrongful convictions, and the administration of California's death penalty law.