

National Forensic Science Week Declared In KS

(MSC News)--Governor Sam Brownback signed a proclamation designating this week as national Forensic Science Week, in recognition of the important role that proper forensic science plays in investigating crimes throughout the state of Kansas, from exonerating the innocent to identifying the guilty.

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) has forensic laboratories in Great Bend, Pittsburg, Kansas City and at the headquarters in Topeka. Kansans are also served by the Johnson County Criminalistics Laboratory and Sedgwick County Regional Forensics Laboratory. While not all services are available at all the facilities, forensic science disciplines include chemistry, biology (which includes DNA and blood spatter), toxicology, digital forensics, questioned documents, fingerprints, firearms and tool marks.

"Forensic science provides a critical support system to every law enforcement agency and every prosecutor," Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said. "Modern forensic science technology is a key element in assuring public safety."

KBI Director Kirk Thompson also expressed appreciation of the Governor's support of forensic science. "Our system seeks the truth, not just convictions. Forensic science can bring a degree of certainty to a trial and ensure justice. We appreciate the Governor emphasizing the critical role these men and women play in making Kansas safe."

KBI Director Thompson also noted the Governor's and the legislature's support of forensic science last session when a new forensic laboratory building project was approved through a partnership between the KBI and Washburn University. "One measure of the success of forensic science is the constantly growing demand for forensic science evidence by officers, courts and juries. This new facility to be completed in 2015, will allow the KBI to reduce backlogs and meet that demand in a timely manner."

"This is one circumstance where the reality is much greater than the depiction on TV. Every day, at crime scenes and in court houses across Kansas, forensic science is unlocking computers of child predators, using DNA to identify rapists, proving that illegal drugs were sold and connecting bullets found in victims to guns found on criminals – all at a rate that even "CSI" type TV producers could only dream," said Thompson. "It is fitting and proper to stop and recognize the tireless and important work of these public servants."

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