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## Local Crime Laboratories

Issue: The Florida Department of Law Enforcement recommended the elimination of all state funding for the five local crime laboratories as part of the Schedule VIII-B exercise.

Total amount of funding that can potentially be *eliminated* is **\$2,379,702**.

- A cut of this nature would first and foremost delay the delivery of justice. If the Legislature implements this budget reduction it would increase backlogs at ***both the local and state crime laboratories***.
- Florida statute 943.35 says the state SHALL provide funding not to exceed 75 % of the actual operating cost of the local laboratories. However, the state does not provide this level of funding to any local crime lab in the state.
  - Example: the State's contribution to Miami-Dade was \$600,000 or 8%; the county contributed \$7,490,000.
- As a result of the economy many counties cannot afford to fund these laboratories without state assistance.
- This budget reduction would prohibit the ***courts*** from processing cases in a timely manner, as evidence for criminal cases would take longer to be analyzed.
- This would have a residual impact on ***county correctional systems*** as more defendants would potentially be awaiting trial in jail.
- The Legislature passed HB 1151 and it was signed into law by Governor Crist. This bill created a statewide DNA database to collect fingerprints of all persons arrested on felony charges and is helping Florida's law enforcement *progress with technology*.

**Please do not implement this budget reduction.**

**80**  
**YEARS**  
1929-2009