

## Sept 15 2005 - Slaughter Announces \$65,495 Grant to Improve the Quality of Forensic Science

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Funds will Expedite Medical Examiner Services

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-Fairport), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, announced that the Department of Justice has awarded Monroe County a Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement grant of \$65,495. The funds will be used to alleviate large backlogs of unanalyzed DNA samples existing in police stations across the country, significantly delaying criminal investigations.

"Too often justice cannot be served because of backlogs in the analysis of forensic evidence," said Rep. Slaughter, adding, "This grant will be used to improve the quality of our scientific technology and medical examiner services across the county."

The Justice Department awards Coverdell grants through their development and evaluation department, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). These funds go directly to local jurisdictions, usually burdened with the greatest DNA backlogs.

### BACKGROUND

According to a study funded by the Justice Department's National Institute of Justice (NIJ), nationally there are 542,700 DNA records waiting to be tested. Newer DNA analysis techniques can yield results from biological evidence invisible to the naked eye, even when the evidence is contaminated. Police departments throughout the country are reexamining unsolved rape and homicide cases using advanced methods of detecting identifiable DNA. Newly processed DNA profiles are uploaded into an FBI database, CODIS, so the data can be compared with evidence in the national system. Matches are reported to law enforcement and then verified by obtaining and analyzing a second sample from the suspect.