



CITIZENS CRIME COMMISSION
OF NEW YORK CITY

For Immediate Release: January 30, 2012

Contact: Ashley Cannon, 212.608.4700 or cannon@caasny.com

Aborn Testifies to Expand DNA Databank

*Governor's proposal integral to solving nearly 40,000 past crimes
and preventing numerous future crimes*

ALBANY, NY- Today Richard M. Aborn, President of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City testified before a joint public hearing on the 2012-2013 Executive Budget Proposal: Topic "Public Protection." Aborn testified in favor of expanding the DNA Databank to include all crimes upon conviction.

"DNA is a very powerful tool. It helps exonerate the innocent, holds violent offenders accountable, prevents future crimes, provides justice for survivors, and helps solve crimes-especially cold cases that have been unresolved for decades. It is the 21st century fingerprint and failing to collect it for all crimes would be like failing to collect fingerprints from all criminals. Ridiculous. DNA is especially important, because criminals don't just wake up and commit violent offenses, they commit less serious crimes first. If we have their DNA in the system, we can ensure rapid justice in the event that they become violent and help prevent future crimes. By failing to collect DNA for all crimes, we're standing in the way of solving nearly 40,000 crimes in New York and preventing numerous future crimes," said Aborn.

Aborn cited several statistics:

Of the offenders linked to homicides and sexual assault cases in the Databank, 34% were required to submit a DNA sample for a drug, burglary, or a petit larceny conviction.

In the 5½ years since we began taking DNA from those convicted of petit larceny those DNA samples have helped solve 965 crimes, including 51 murders, 222 sexual assaults, 117 robberies and 407 burglaries.

Offenders matched to crimes through the DNA Databank on average had three prior non-qualifying convictions before they were convicted of an offense that required a sample be taken.

Full text of Aborn's testimony is available at:

<http://www.nycrimecommission.org/pdfs/CrimeCmsnDNATestimony.pdf>

Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, Inc., 335 Madison Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10017
p: 212.608.4700 • f: 212.350.2701 • e: info@nycrimecommission.org
www.nycrimecommission.org

Background

The Governor's proposal would add about 180 Penal Law misdemeanors and approximately 200-250 felonies in other state laws, including the Vehicle and Traffic; Tax and Finance; and Agriculture and Markets Law, to name a few. It details which agency would be responsible for collection of samples: Probation Departments if the offender is sentenced to Probation or the Sheriff's Office if the sentence does not include either Probation or term of imprisonment. It does not prohibit any other agency - such as the courts, parole or police - from taking samples if they are notified by DCJS that an offender owes a sample as a result of a DNA-eligible conviction.

The law would take effect Oct. 1, 2012; it is not retroactive to offenders under sentence.

The Citizens Crime Commission of New York City is a non-partisan non-profit organization working to make criminal justice and public safety policies and practices more effective through innovation, research, and education. In the last three decades, the Crime Commission has been a leader on key issues such as: increasing the size of the NYPD, expanding the use of DNA evidence in crime fighting, creating innovations that reduce juvenile crime, developing interventions against gun violence and illegal gun crime, and highlighting the changing nature of the threat of terrorism.

###