

**Testimony of Jasper Ormond, Interim Director  
Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia  
Before the Committee of the Judiciary  
Council of the District of Columbia**

March 8, 2001

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before the Judiciary Committee on the "DNA Sample Collection Act of 2001". Nearly every day there is an account in the news media describing how DNA analysis has been used to solve a crime that has been impossible to solve through traditional investigative techniques. Almost as often there is an account of a defendant who was exonerated by DNA evidence after conviction of a crime he/she did not commit. We at the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) look forward to working with the Council and other agencies of the District of Columbia criminal justice system to make this invaluable tool available for cases prosecuted in the District of Columbia.

Since we are a relatively new addition to the District of Columbia criminal justice system, I would like to begin by providing a brief background of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency. The Agency was established under the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 to coordinate the supervision of pretrial defendants, as well as offenders placed on probation or released on parole or supervised release following terms of incarceration. After a three-year trusteeship, the Agency was certified an independent agency in August of 2000. Although a Federal Agency, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency is unique in that we provide supervision and services only to District of Columbia defendants/offenders. The mission of the Agency is to increase public safety by providing effective community supervision, and to enhance decision making by the

Superior Court and the paroling authority by providing comprehensive and timely reports and evaluations.

As you are aware, the “DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000,” signed by The President on December 19, 2000, provides that by no later than June 19, 2001, and contingent only upon the availability of appropriations, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency shall commence collection of DNA samples from offenders under supervision by the Agency. Qualifying offenses are to be determined by the District of Columbia Government.

As to implementation of collection of DNA samples, CSOSA will be prepared to do so within the time limits prescribed by Congress. The Federal law enacted in December has been a subject of discussion on the Hill for some time. In anticipation of the new law and the role of the Agency in the collection process, the Agency requested and received an appropriation of \$100,000 in our FY 2000 budget to implement DNA collection. With these funds we will be able to implement and fund DNA collection for the balance of the Fiscal Year.

Since December, Agency staff has met on numerous occasions with representatives of the FBI, the Bureau of Prisons and others involved in the DNA collection process. We have discussed issues such as identification of offenders and submission of DNA samples on DC offenders by the Agency and the Bureau of Prisons; avoiding double collection of samples from offenders already included in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), and; development of common forms to be employed by the Agency and the Bureau of Prisons. The Federal law requires that the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts promulgate procedures for the activities of Federal Probation

Officers who collect samples from Federal offenders. We will monitor the development of those procedures and adopt conforming procedures, if appropriate.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.