

CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTY SECOND COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-16-140 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Dan Lewis

1 RESOLUTION

2 CREATING NEW PRIORITY OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE PUBLIC SAFETY GOAL
3 RELATING TO ELIMINATING THE BACKLOG OF UNTESTED SEXUAL
4 ASSAULT EVIDENCE KITS IN THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE.

5 WHEREAS, DNA evidence is an invaluable investigative tool, and rape kit
6 evidence can identify an unknown assailant, reveal serial offenders, and
7 exonerate the wrongly convicted; and

8 WHEREAS, in New Mexico there is currently a backlog of more than 5,000
9 rape kits that have not yet been processed, which represents thousands of
10 leads to investigate, survivors to re-engage with compassion and care, and
11 cases to prosecute; and

12 WHEREAS, in the City of Albuquerque alone there are hundreds of such
13 kits waiting to be processed; and

14 WHEREAS, each sexual assault kit represents a survivor who underwent an
15 hours-long sexual assault kit collection process and reported the assault to
16 the police;

17 WHEREAS, each kit represents a survivor who deserves to have that kit
18 tested, and who deserves justice; and

19 WHEREAS, the issue of untested sexual assault evidence kits is difficult
20 not because of a lack of effort on behalf of the police department, but rather
21 because of a lack of availability of qualified candidates and a lack of capacity
22 at private labs; and

23 WHEREAS, the Justice Department's new Sexual Assault Kit Initiative
24 (SAKI) represents an opportunity to provide local communities with resources
25 to support multidisciplinary community response teams engaged in the
26 comprehensive reform of jurisdictions' approaches to sexual assault cases.
27 This includes testing backlogged kits; investigating and prosecuting cases

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connected to the backlog; and addressing the need for victim notification and re-engagement with the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes that processing the backlog of unprocessed sexual assault evidence kits should be a priority for the City and for APD.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE:

Section 1. That a new priority objective is created under the PUBLIC SAFETY GOAL reading as follows:

“The Chief of Police shall work with representatives from Central New Mexico Community College to create a scholarship or other incentive program to increase the number of students completing degree programs that will qualify them for careers in APD and state crime labs. The Chief shall report to the City Council by the end of the third quarter of FY/17 on the feasibility and costs associated with such a scholarship or incentive program.

Section 2. That a new priority objective is created under the PUBLIC SAFETY GOAL reading as follows:

“The Albuquerque Police Department shall, by the end of the third quarter of FY17, establish a working group consisting of representatives from the following groups:

1. The director of a statewide coalition to end sexual violence or designee;
2. The director of a rape crisis center or designee;
3. The director of the City’s Family Advocacy Center or designee;
4. The director of a sexual assault nurse examiner program in Albuquerque or designee;
5. The statewide sexual assault nurse examiner coordinator or designee;
6. The director of the Albuquerque Police Department’s crime laboratory or designee;
7. The Chief of the Albuquerque Police Department or designee;

The working group shall meet at least quarterly to assess the progress of processing backlogged sexual assault evidence kits and to make

1 recommendations for quickly clearing the backlog. The working group shall
2 report to the Administration and to the City Council on a quarterly basis,
3 beginning with the first quarter of FY/18. (APD)”
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