

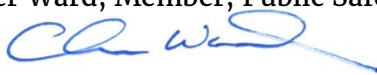


OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER CHRISTOPHER WARD THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: October 10, 2017

TO: Councilmember Chris Cate, Chair, Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee

FROM: Councilmember Christopher Ward, Member, Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods Committee 

SUBJECT: Request for Information Item for Update on Rape Kit Testing

I respectfully request that the Public Safety and Livable Neighborhoods committee bring forward an information item by the end of this calendar year to discuss the status of the testing of rape kits on hold by the San Diego Police Department.

During the FY18 Budget discussions and adoption, an additional \$500,000 was allocated with specific direction to reduce the backlog of over 2,500 untested rape kits at the time of adoption. This funding was in addition to the Mayor's draft budget and May revisions for ongoing support to sustain this year's anticipated workload.

As we are well into this fiscal year, and given the strong interest by members of the public to reduce this backlog and fulfill responsibilities of justice, it is timely to bring this issue back to committee for an update on the implementation of this budget allocation.

While at a minimum the testing of every rape kit honors the commitment to victims to analyze evidence procured during a time of trauma, it also provides the potential benefit of identifying multiple perpetrators, solving cold cases, identifying repeat offenders, and more.

Other cities in California with previous backlogs of untested kits have corrected their status and San Diego should follow suit. Testing is an imperative function of our city government and where previously insufficient funding had been claimed to be partially responsible for the backlog, we have addressed that.

However, as [reported recently in the media](#), "a [Police] department spokesman said they're using the money to buy equipment to improve turnaround time for testing the kits. Any

remaining money will go toward testing unanalyzed kits." This would not be consistent with the council's stated intention for this funding during the budget process. To address questions regarding accountability and - more importantly - justice for victims, it would be prudent for us to receive an update from the San Diego Police Department on this issue.

cc:

Cc: Hon. Council President Myrtle Cole
Hon. Kevin L. Faulconer, Mayor
Shelley Zimmerman, Chief of Police
Mara W. Elliott, City Attorney
Andrea Tevlin, Independent Budget Analyst