

Resolution No. 486

**CALLING FOR THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE TO FULLY FUND THE
WASHINGTON STATE PATROL CRIME LABORATORY AND TOXICOLOGY
LABORATORY**

WHEREAS, the Washington State Patrol oversees a Crime Laboratory which operates five multi-service crime laboratories in Seattle, Tacoma, Marysville, Spokane, Vancouver and limited-service crime laboratories including the Kennewick, Tumwater (Latents Fingerprints), and the CODIS Laboratory in Seattle; and

WHEREAS, the Crime Laboratory exists to provide quality forensic services for criminal justice agencies within the state of Washington such as: DNA Testing, CODIS Laboratory (felon database program), Convicted Offender DNA Collection, Firearm/Toolmark Analysts, Materials Analysis (Seized Drugs, Explosives and Ignitable Liquids, Impressions, and Trace Materials), Questions Documents, Latent Fingerprint Identification and Crime Scene Assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Patrol also operates a Toxicology Laboratory that performs drug and alcohol testing for coroners, medical examiners, law enforcement agencies, prosecuting attorneys and the State Liquor Cannabis Board in all 39 Washington counties; and

WHEREAS, the Crime Laboratory and Toxicology Laboratory have for years been operating without adequate resources, the result being that numerous forensic testing backlogs have developed and forensic testing turnaround times have dramatically increased impacted the ability to resolve pending criminal cases; and

WHEREAS, however, the Washington State Legislature has focused legislation and appropriations on the pressing need to address a significant backlog of sexual assault kits across Washington; and

WHEREAS, similar progress has not yet been made by the Washington State Legislature in relation to other forensic testing backlogs that have come to exist within the Crime Laboratory and Toxicology Laboratory ; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement, prosecutors, coroners, medical examiners and other public health officials have during this been dealing with an increasing number of investigatory and prosecutorial challenges stemming from the testing backlog and increased testing turnaround time ; and,

WHEREAS, these challenges have required some of the normal user agencies of the Crime Laboratory and Toxicology Laboratory to outsourcing, often at local government expense, forensic testing to private laboratories in order to reduce testing backlogs and turnaround times so that criminal cases may be more quickly resolved and families may timely learn the outcome of death investigations involving a loved one; and

WHEREAS, after discussing the matter with the Clallam County Prosecutor, the Chief of Police and the City Attorney, City Council finds that the lack of resources has resulted in a crisis within the Crime Laboratory and Toxicology Laboratory that is ongoing and continuous and that is negatively impacting public health and safety disciplines in Clallam County and the City of Forks as well as across the state; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that one of the best ways to address this crisis is to address the Washington State Legislature regarding the dire and immediate need for additional resources at the Crime Laboratory and Toxicology Laboratory;

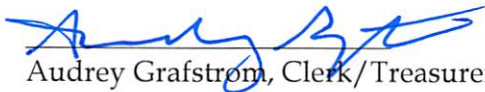
NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORKS, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES that the Washington State Legislature fully fund, enhance the operations of, and expand the capacity of the Washington State Patrol Crime and Toxicology Laboratories while utilizing tax revenues from the sale of liquor and cannabis instead of using state surplus funding, creating new taxes, and/or developing new fees to pay for these needed enhancements.

Adopted by the Forks City Council on this 9th day of March, 2020.




Tim Fletcher, Mayor

ATTEST:



Audrey Grafstrom, Clerk/Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


William R. Fleck, Attorney/Planner