

# **N E W S   R E L E A S E**

For Immediate Release

Contact:       Sheila McCant  
                  Nancy Johnson  
                  LA House of Representatives  
                  Office of Public Information  
                  Phone: (225) 342-9795  
                  Fax:     (225) 219-4380

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## **HOUSE MONEY HELPS SOLVE CRIME**

### **SUSPECT IDENTIFIED AFTER RAPE KITS PROCESSED**

House Speaker Charlie DeWitt said he has been notified by Louisiana State Police (LSP) that the surplus money transferred by the House of Representatives to State Police last spring to help process "no suspect" rape kits has already resulted in the identification of a suspect in one rape case. It has also been determined that two other cases were committed by the same person and that case is still under investigation.

DeWitt said, "This is great news. This money has already helped to solve a crime and I can't think of any better use of this money. This also shows that the DNA laws we enacted this session, the most aggressive in the nation, will untie the hands of law enforcement agencies and give them another tool to do their jobs and solve crimes.

I am hopeful that this will also be a deterrent to future criminal activity. We are sending a message that if you commit a sexual crime, you will be caught and you will be convicted."

During the 2003 Regular Session, the Speaker announced that the House would transfer \$650,000 of surplus money to Louisiana State Police to process untested rape kits. This was done in the hope of helping law enforcement solve these cases and to aid in the investigation and apprehension of the South Louisiana serial killer.

**(more)**

## **add one - House**

Lt. William Davis of the Public Affairs Unit of LSP said the State Police Crime Lab shared the money with the Acadiana Crime Lab and the New Orleans Police Dept. Crime Lab. He said the money went to these locales because of their proximity to the area in which the South Louisiana serial killer was operating. In turn, these crime labs had third party vendors process some of their rape kits. This was done due to the number of rape kits they had and as part of a pilot program to select the best vendors to assist with processing the kits.

Acadiana Crime Lab sent approximately half of their 15 kits to a third party vendor. The results were entered into the state database, CODIS (Combined DNA Indexing System), which is under the direction of LSP, the state repository for DNA samples. Of the 15 "runs" they received evidence from 14 that they were able to input. From these 14 they received 3 "hits" or matched profiles already in the database. One kit did not contain enough DNA evidence to be processed. One of the three profiles matched that of an inmate currently incarcerated within the Dept. of Corrections. Davis said confirmation of these DNA tests will have to be performed and it will be up to the local law enforcement agency where the crime was committed to proceed with charges.

The other two "hits" belong to the same person. Those cases are open and because of this no aspect of the case can be discussed.

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