



LOUISIANA SENATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 12.11.14

CONTACT: SENATOR MORRELL

PHONE: 504.284.4794

State Senator Morrell Urges Agencies to Submit Information on Untested Rape Kits as Per New State Law

Deadline for Submission Looms

District 3 State Senator JP Morrell (D-New Orleans) urges state law enforcement and criminal justice agencies across the state handling untested sexual assault DNA collection kits to report the number of untested kits in their possession to the Louisiana State Police (LSP) crime lab by the January 1, 2015 deadline set by new state law.

Sen. Morrell's Act 124 of the 2014 Regular Session set the Jan. 1 deadline as an effort to get a firm number on how many untested sexual assault kits are in law enforcement's hands. The law went into effect August 1, 2014 and as of December 11, only 53 out of 421 law enforcement agencies have reported, revealing 284 untested kits so far. Sen. Morrell said that the lack of reports from so many agencies so close to the deadline is concerning.

"I would like to applaud the law enforcement agencies that have already submitted their reports," said Sen. Morrell. "I would also like to remind those that have not submitted their numbers of the importance of this law and of this effort. While January 1, 2015 is the hard deadline as created by law, the sooner we can collect this data, the sooner we can fix the problem and work to find justice for hundreds of rape victims."

Act 124 is part of an effort to "end the backlog," a national movement to upload DNA evidence from sexual assaults into the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), which links federal, state and local criminal justice agencies.

###