



Report to the Interim Joint Committee
on Appropriations and Revenue

Consolidation of
Kentucky State Police Electronic Crime Lab
and
Office of the Attorney General Cyber Crime Unit

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Commissioner
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During the 2022 Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly, Governor Andy Beshear signed into law HB 1 which directs the Commissioner of the Kentucky State Police to work collaboratively with the Kentucky Office of Attorney General to identify a pathway to consolidate the Commonwealth's electronic crimes laboratories and to develop a report of all cases at the Commonwealth's electronic crimes laboratories.

The following report describes the findings and recommendations related to the proposal to consolidate the Commonwealth's electronic crimes laboratories. The Kentucky State Police and the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General have worked independently toward a similar mission, which is providing criminal investigations and digital forensic services to officers of the Commonwealth to ensure proper investigation and documentation for their criminal investigations involving digital evidence.

The digital forensic laboratories are not consolidated due to the vast difference in scope and technological ability to analyze digital evidence. The Kentucky State Police Electronic Crime Branch forensic laboratory is an advanced full-service digital forensic laboratory conducting basic cellular phone and computer extractions, including in-depth analysis, to the most advanced chip-off circuit board analysis and vehicular infotainment exploratory probe for data extractions from a vehicle.

In contrast, the Kentucky Office of Attorney General Cyber Crimes Unit conducts basic cellular phone and computer extractions for their own investigations and often assists other agencies when needed, providing the data extract with no additional in-depth analysis. Additionally, other police departments across the Commonwealth have now begun conducting their own cellular phone extractions in many cases just as they do at the Office of the Attorney General which means consolidation would need to be considered with others as well.

The Kentucky State Police Electronic Crime Branch and the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General Cyber Crimes Unit are dual-purposed, with both investigations and forensic analysis having statewide jurisdiction. The Kentucky State Police Electronic Crime Branch has worked joint investigations with the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General, whether it be a complaint from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children or an undercover chat detail.

Additionally, the Kentucky State Police Electronic Crime Branch forensic laboratory has several different full-service locations consisting of the Electronic Crime Branch Frankfort Laboratory, the Kentucky Regional Computer Forensic Laboratory located in Louisville and the Eastern Kentucky University Electronic Crime Branch Laboratory located on the Eastern Kentucky University Campus which partners with the Eastern Kentucky University Computer Forensic Science Program providing student internships in computer forensics. The Office of the Attorney General's lab is located in Franklin County.

From January 2022 through November 2022, the Kentucky State Police digital forensic laboratory received 291 new requests, and successfully completed 355 exams, examined 1,373.5 terabytes of data, examined 256 cellular phones and examined 1,402 other evidence items.

In closing, the Kentucky State Police and the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General agree a consolidation of the two digital forensic laboratories would not be in the best interest of the two agencies nor the Commonwealth due to the profound differences in scope and ability of their forensic examinations.

