

Reps. Murphy, Brandenburg, Ehardt, Reeves, Accavitti, Adamini, Anderson, Brown, Byrum, Clack, DeRossett, Elkins, Garfield, Gleason, Hager, Hunter, Jamnick, Kolb, Lipsey, McConico, Milosch, Minore, Mortimer, Nofs, O'Neil, Rivet, Shaffer, Stallworth, Vagnozzi, Zelenko, Bieda and Phillips offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 144.

A resolution to memorialize Congress to provide incentives and support for DNA testing of convicted criminals, especially those facing capital punishment or life imprisonment.

Whereas, In recent years, there have been numerous news accounts of cases in which convicted criminals have been freed as a result of conclusive DNA testing. In many instances, this evidence, often unavailable when the crime was initially investigated and prosecuted, has saved people on death row or facing life imprisonment; and

Whereas, The number of convicted people found not to have committed the crimes for which they faced death or life imprisonment is disturbing to many people. In Illinois, recurring situations of DNA tests exonerating prisoners led the governor to place a moratorium on the death penalty; and

Whereas, Closer to home, Michigan enacted legislation in 2000 (2000 PA 402) that permits post-conviction DNA testing. Our state has now witnessed the impact that the overwhelming weight of DNA evidence can have in proving prior convictions to be in error. A recent case taken up by Project Innocence, an initiative of Cooley Law School students and faculty, led to the exoneration of a man sentenced in 1994 in Macomb County on multiple counts of first degree criminal sexual conduct (rape); and

Whereas, In addition to the clear moral issues involved, steps that encourage greater use of the powerful tool of DNA testing can greatly increase faith in our system of justice; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize Congress to provide incentives and support for DNA testing of convicted criminals, especially those facing capital punishment or life imprisonment; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.