

Kaul campaign: Schimel's Headline-Driven Approach to Testing Delays Isn't Getting the Job Done

Posted on Wednesday, May 9, 2018

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MADISON — Yesterday, [yet another story](#) broke about Attorney General Brad Schimel's ongoing failure adequately to address delays in the testing of evidence. The article reported that "[a]verage response times have increased substantially for DNA, drug, firearms and other types of evidence" submitted to the state crime labs.

The article also revealed that Schimel was spurred to action approximately a year and a half ago by a desire to stop bad media coverage. On November 3, 2016, Schimel wrote in an email, "We can not have headlines about crime lab backlogs." Schimel added, "Let's discuss how to resolve asap." On the same day, the Journal Times had published an article with the headline, "[Crime lab backlog prompting evidence delay.](#)"

Nearly 10 months later, Schimel was again apparently motivated by the press to take action. On August 31, 2017, Schimel issued a press release announcing new steps that would be taken in response to an increase in submissions to the state crime labs. On September 5, 2017, [Keegan Kyle reported](#) that Schimel announced these new steps just hours after the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) released records to USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin.

Nevertheless, Kyle reported yesterday that, "[i]n the 18 months that followed" Schimel's November 3, 2016 email, "state crime lab workers increasingly struggled to keep up with caseloads" and "testing delays grew."

In the meantime, Schimel declined to acknowledge the testing delays:

- On September 5, 2017, [Keegan Kyle reported](#) that Schimel “declined during a phone interview to say if testing delays had grown.”
- On the same day, a spokesperson for DOJ said, [“The definition of a ‘backlog’ is subjective.”](#)
- On November 21, 2017, [Colleen Henry of WISN 12 NEWS reported](#) on a “[d]river involved in [a] fatal July crash [who] was out on bail after [his] 5th OWI charge because [the] court hadn’t received [the] toxicology report.” Henry reported that a spokesperson for DOJ “denied there are any delays” and stated, “The only account of delays are from the media and a political organization hell-bent on ensuring Brad Schimel is not attorney general after the 2018 election.”

Former federal prosecutor and candidate for Attorney General Josh Kaul commented, “Our current Attorney General’s headline-driven approach to addressing testing delays isn’t getting the job done. We need an Attorney General who is committed to fixing this problem.”

Josh Kaul served as a federal prosecutor in Baltimore, one of America’s most violent cities. There, Kaul prosecuted murderers, gang members, and drug traffickers, taking dangerous criminals off the street and making communities more secure. He grew up in Oshkosh and Fond du Lac in a family of law enforcement professionals and teachers. He is running for Attorney General in 2018.

For more information, please visit: www.joshkaul.org