



# DenverDA

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **KATIE'S LAW IN EFFECT AT MIDNIGHT**

A new law that will expand the DNA database in Colorado takes effect at midnight. Under the new law, anyone arrested for a felony crime will be required to submit a DNA sample. Previously, only convicted felons sentenced to the Colorado Department of Corrections were required to submit a DNA sample.

The new law is called "Katie's Law" in honor of a 22-year-old graduate student from New Mexico who was raped and murdered in 2003. Her killer was eventually identified using DNA, but only after he was arrested and convicted on a burglary charge and sent to prison.

The impact of the new law is expected to be significant in crime prevention, and is expected to increase investigation-aided database matches by 20 to 30 percent.

The law was drafted by Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey and Chief Deputy District Attorney Robin Whitley, and was supported by lawmakers from both major political parties including sponsors Sen. John Morse, D-Colorado Springs, Rep. Steve King, R-Grand Junction, and Rep. Scott Tipton, R-Cortez.

Morrissey, who drafted the law carefully with constitutional privacy rights in mind, has identified three murders and 18 sexual assaults that could have been prevented in Denver since 1989 if DNA has been collected at the time of arrest. A provision of the new law allows for the removal and destruction of DNA samples taken from arrestees who are not formally charged.