
Issue Brief – State Health Laboratory Equipment

NUMBER HHS-05-09

SUMMARY

The State Health Laboratory provides laboratory services to the Departments of Health, Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, and Agriculture and Food, as well as other state agencies, hospitals, clinics, labs, and physicians throughout the state. The laboratory has an inventory of over \$7 million in equipment, with an average life of 10 years or less. Much of the current inventory of equipment is old; some is obsolete. The Legislature appropriated \$240,000 in one-time funding in 1996 and an additional \$286,300 in 1997. Since that time, no additional state funds have been approved for the purpose of replacing laboratory equipment. The lab has been able to repair machinery and thus extend the life of some of the testing equipment. In addition, some of the federal grants have authorized the purchase of equipment. However, periodic appropriations of state funds are necessary to keep the laboratory functioning and able to respond to requests for tests.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Analyst recommends that the Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee approve \$500,000 in one-time FY 2005 supplemental funding for the purchase of laboratory equipment. The Analyst also recommends intent language be approved designating the funding as non-lapsing, to allow the department flexibility in its use of the funds.