

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

WORLD TRADE

RULES COMMITTEE

ADMIN REG REVIEW

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

WHILE IN SESSION
STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, AK 99801
(907) 465-4930

•
WHILE IN ANCHORAGE
716 W. 4TH AVE
ANCHORAGE, AK 99501
(907) 269-0174

SENATOR BERTA GARDNER SENATE MINORITY LEADER

March 26, 2015

Dear Chairman Hawker,

I respectfully request the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee direct the Division of Legislative Audit to conduct an audit of the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory (ASCDL). ASCDL is an \$87 million crime lab completed in 2012 and has an annual budget of \$6 million. In 2009, the new lab was deemed necessary as the previous facility was no longer capable of meeting the State's forensic needs primarily due to the increased demand for DNA analysis. The ASCDL was designed to increase laboratory and evidence storage space, enhance the lab's analysis capabilities, and allow for expansion to meet future demands.

Legislators and Alaska citizens have expressed concern over ASCDL operations including the limited types of laboratory services provided, the extent of backlogs, and whether the new lab facility's capacity is meeting expectations. Additionally, our office has received complaints alleging mismanagement, as well as a history of at least one employee engaging in criminal activity with illegal narcotics.

For the aforementioned reasons, I request a comprehensive audit of ASCDL covering a six year period (2008 – present) that includes the following objectives:

1. Document ASCDL services and evaluate how the new facility has impacted available services.
2. Identify the nature and extent of services outsourced by ASCDL. Evaluate the costs versus benefits of outsourcing.
3. Document the extent of service request backlogs by service type and length of time in backlog. Include the number of untested rape kits currently stored.
4. Determine and evaluate the causes for service request backlogs.

5. Evaluate evidence control procedures and determine if they are suitable designed to ensure the integrity of evidence. Evaluate personnel practices to ensure practices are adequately designed to promote effective operations.
6. Compare productivity measures to national benchmarks and determine whether the ASDCL is operating efficiently.
7. Evaluate ASDCL performance measures and verify the accuracy of agency reported statistics. Determine whether the agency's results-based measures demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of the agency's core services and objectives and recommend changes if necessary.
8. Determine statistics regarding staff retention and turnover, including but not limited to highly-skilled technicians and analysts that serve essential functions of the ASDCL.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Berta Gardner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Senator Berta Gardner