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### **MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE INNOCENCE PROJECT**

The Innocence Project (IP) provides pro bono post-conviction legal assistance to persons whose claims of innocence might be demonstrably proven by DNA testing. The IP has established a Policy Department to bring about the reforms needed to protect Americans from wrongful prosecution and incarceration. Since its inception in 1992, the Innocence Project has been instrumental in bringing about the following results:

**Exonerations:** 183 innocent people, including 14 who were at one time sentenced to death, have won their freedom since the IP's establishment in 1992. The Innocence Project was either the attorney of record or assisted in the majority of cases;

**Access to DNA testing:** 41 states, as well as the District of Columbia and the federal government have passed legislation providing access to post-conviction DNA testing;

**Federal Legislation:** The IP worked with sponsors of the *Justice For All Act of 2004*, to craft critical aspects of this federal legislation that was signed into law and:

- \* Enables federal inmates to apply for post-conviction DNA testing and ensures the preservation of biological evidence;
- \* Enhances the quality of counsel for indigent defendants in death penalty cases;
- \* Increases the amount of compensation money for wrongfully convicted defendants in the federal system. (\$50,000/year in non-capital cases and \$100,000/year in capital cases);
- \* Mandates external, independent audits of crime labs in states receiving federal monies, when an allegation of misconduct or gross negligence is made.

**Eyewitness Identification Reform:** Major jurisdictions have adopted the Department of Justice guidelines for improving identification procedures used by law enforcement. Among those practicing these reforms are:

The State of New Jersey	Seattle, WA	Onodoga County, NY
The State of Virginia	Boston, MA	Northampton, MA
The State of North Carolina	Santa Clara County, CA	
The State of Wisconsin	Hennepin County, MN	

**Crime Lab Audits:** The IP won independent audits of crime laboratories in Cleveland, Virginia and Texas following exonerations that uncovered negligence and misconduct by analysts in these labs;

**Crime Lab Oversight:** The IP helped secure passage of the historic "Texas Forensic Science Commission" bill, creating a state commission empowered to investigate problems in crime labs;

**Death penalty moratorium:** The New York State Assembly decided not to reinstate the death penalty during 2005. Testimony by IP Co-Director Barry Scheck and Policy Director Stephen Saloom was cited as a factor in the Assembly's decision.

**Jury Instructions: Eyewitness Identifications:** The Connecticut Supreme Court ruled in State v. Ledbetter to require that Connecticut trial courts give specific jury instructions regarding the need to warn witnesses that the real perpetrator may not be among those in the identification procedure. The IP filed the amicus brief upon which this part of the decision relied.