

Does collecting accused felons' DNA violate constitutional right to privacy?

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Suffolk District Attorney Daniel F. Conley backed a bill that would allow police to collect the DNA of people arrested for felonies during booking, calling the genetic material a crucial tool to help solve — and prevent — violent crime, during a Joint Committee on the Judiciary hearing at the State House.

“DNA fingerprinting for felony arrests will reveal the identity of violent offenders, and it is most prevalent in crimes of sexual violence against women,” said Conley, who is president of the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association and spoke flanked by three other district attorneys. “Gathering DNA fingerprints won’t just identify sexual predators — it will help us stop them before they strike again.”

Currently, people convicted of felonies are required to give a DNA sample, Conley said. The bill, put forth by state Representative Edward F. Coppinger and called An Act Relative to the DNA Database, would allow officials to collect the sample at the time of a felony arrest.

Coppinger said the DNA sampling could also identify and exonerate the innocent.

But Ann Lambert, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts , said that allowing the government to collect DNA from people who have not been convicted of a crime was a dangerous and unconstitutional invasion of privacy.

Read full, original post: [Prosecutor backs expanded DNA testing](#)