

By: Bivins

S.B. No. 1129

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to the admissibility in a criminal proceeding of certain
3 laboratory analyses of physical evidence or statements as to the
4 chain of custody of physical evidence.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Chapter 38, Code of Criminal Procedure, is
7 amended by adding Articles 38.41 and 38.42 to read as follows:

8 Art. 38.41. CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS

9 Sec. 1. A certificate of analysis that complies with this
10 article is admissible in evidence on behalf of the state or the
11 defendant to establish the results of a laboratory analysis of
12 physical evidence conducted by or for a law enforcement agency
13 without the necessity of the analyst personally appearing in court.

14 Sec. 2. This article does not limit the right of a party to
15 summon a witness or to introduce admissible evidence relevant to
16 the results of the analysis.

17 Sec. 3. A certificate of analysis under this article must
18 contain the following information certified under oath:

19 (1) the names of the analyst and the laboratory
20 employing the analyst;

21 (2) a statement that the laboratory employing the
22 analyst is accredited by a nationally recognized board or
23 association that accredits crime laboratories;

24 (3) a description of the analyst's educational

1 background, training, and experience;

2 (4) a statement that the analyst's duties of
3 employment included the analysis of physical evidence for one or
4 more law enforcement agencies;

5 (5) a description of the tests or procedures conducted
6 by the analyst;

7 (6) a statement that the tests or procedures used were
8 reliable and approved by the laboratory employing the analyst; and

9 (7) the results of the analysis.

10 Sec. 4. Not later than the 20th day before the trial begins
11 in a proceeding in which a certificate of analysis under this
12 article is to be introduced, the certificate must be filed with the
13 clerk of the court and a copy must be provided by fax, hand
14 delivery, or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the
15 opposing party. The certificate is not admissible under Section 1
16 if, not later than the 10th day before the trial begins, the
17 opposing party files a written objection to the use of the
18 certificate with the clerk of the court and provides a copy of the
19 objection by fax, hand delivery, or certified mail, return receipt
20 requested, to the offering party.

21 Sec. 5. A certificate of analysis is sufficient for
22 purposes of this article if it uses the following form or if it
23 otherwise substantially complies with this article:

24 CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS

25 BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, personally appeared
26 _____, who being duly sworn, stated as follows:

27 My name is _____. I am of sound mind, over the age of 18

1 years, capable of making this affidavit, and personally acquainted
2 with the facts stated in this affidavit.

3 I am employed by the _____, which was authorized to
4 conduct the analysis referenced in this affidavit. Part of my
5 duties for this laboratory involved the analysis of physical
6 evidence for one or more law enforcement agencies. This laboratory
7 is accredited by _____.

8 My educational background is as follows: (description of
9 educational background)

10 My training and experience that qualify me to perform the
11 tests or procedures referred to in this affidavit and determine the
12 results of those tests or procedures are as follows: (description
13 of training and experience)

14 I received the physical evidence listed on laboratory report
15 no. _____ (attached) on the _____ day of _____, 20__. On the
16 date indicated in the laboratory report, I conducted the following
17 tests or procedures on the physical evidence: (description of
18 tests and procedures)

19 The tests and procedures used were reliable and approved by
20 the laboratory. The results are as indicated on the lab report.

21 _____

22 Affiant

23 SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the ___ day of _____,
24 20__.

25 _____

26 Notary Public, State of Texas

1 Art. 38.42. CHAIN OF CUSTODY AFFIDAVIT

2 Sec. 1. A chain of custody affidavit that complies with this
3 article is admissible in evidence on behalf of the state or the
4 defendant to establish the chain of custody of physical evidence
5 without the necessity of any person in the chain of custody
6 personally appearing in court.

7 Sec. 2. This article does not limit the right of a party to
8 summon a witness or to introduce admissible evidence relevant to
9 the chain of custody.

10 Sec. 3. A chain of custody affidavit under this article must
11 contain the following information stated under oath:

12 (1) the affiant's name and address;

13 (2) a description of the item of evidence and its
14 container, if any, obtained by the affiant;

15 (3) the name of the affiant's employer on the date the
16 affiant obtained custody of the physical evidence;

17 (4) the date and method of receipt and the name of the
18 person from whom or location from which the item of physical
19 evidence was received;

20 (5) the date and method of transfer and the name of the
21 person to whom or location to which the item of physical evidence
22 was transferred; and

23 (6) a statement that the item of evidence was
24 transferred in essentially the same condition as received except
25 for any minor change resulting from field or laboratory testing
26 procedures.

27 Sec. 4. Not later than the 20th day before the trial begins

1 in a proceeding in which a chain of custody affidavit under this
2 article is to be introduced, the affidavit must be filed with the
3 clerk of the court and a copy must be provided by fax, hand
4 delivery, or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the
5 opposing party. The affidavit is not admissible under Section 1 if,
6 not later than the 10th day before the trial begins, the opposing
7 party files a written objection to the use of the affidavit with the
8 clerk of the court and provides a copy of the objection by fax, hand
9 delivery, or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the
10 offering party.

11 Sec. 5. A chain of custody affidavit is sufficient for
12 purposes of this article if it uses the following form or if it
13 otherwise substantially complies with this article:

14 CHAIN OF CUSTODY AFFIDAVIT

15 BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, personally appeared
16 _____ , who being by me duly sworn, stated as
17 follows:

18 My name is _____ . I am of sound mind, over
19 the age of 18 years, capable of making this affidavit, and
20 personally acquainted with the facts stated in this affidavit.

21 My address is _____ .

22 On the ____ day of _____ , 20__ , I was employed by
23 _____ .

24 On that date, I came into possession of the physical evidence
25 described as follows: (description of evidence)

26 I received the physical evidence from _____ (name
27 of person or description of location) on the ____ day of

1 _____, 20____, by _____ (method of receipt).

2 This physical evidence was in a container described and
3 marked as follows: (description of container)

4 I transferred the physical evidence to _____
5 (name of person or description of location) on the _____ day of
6 _____, 20____, by _____ (method of delivery).

7 During the time that the physical evidence was in my custody,
8 I did not make any changes or alterations to the condition of the
9 physical evidence except for those resulting from field or
10 laboratory testing procedures, and the physical evidence or a
11 representative sample of the physical evidence was transferred in
12 essentially the same condition as received.

13 _____

14 Affiant

15 SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the _____ day of
16 _____, 20____.

17 _____

18 Notary Public, State of Texas

19 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.