

**Ohio Department of Public Safety**  
**Testimony of Director John Born**  
**House Finance Committee**  
**February 2, 2017**

- Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Ryan, Ranking Minority Member Cera and Members of the House Finance Committee: I am John Born, Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety. It is an honor to appear before you today to testify on the budget for the Ohio Department of Public Safety.
- As you will see, this is a flat funded budget request so I won't spend a great deal of time reading every line but I do want to hit the key points.
- Ohio is a safer state and Ohioans should be proud of the contribution of the women and men of the Ohio Department of Public Safety toward that goal.
- The Special Investigation Unit Director of a Fortune 100 company, who has 20 years law enforcement experience and 16 years in his current role, recently emailed this to me about the Ohio Department of Public Safety:

- “I have met with hundreds of law enforcement agencies across the country and your agency stands alone in its professionalism, forward thinking and service to the community.”
- Of course for us at the Ohio Department of Public Safety, our nearly 4,000 employees do much more than just law enforcement. But one thing they all share is a common commitment that was echoed in those comments I just shared.
- Through safety, service and protection, every one of our employees is dedicated to the mission of contributing to a safer Ohio.
- More specifically we are dedicated to the mission of saving lives, reducing injuries and economic loss, administering Ohio’s motor vehicle laws, and regulating driver licensing and registration through our six divisions.
- Our senior staff is here today and will be available to answer any questions I am unable to respond to at the conclusion of my testimony.

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- Although we do many things at the Ohio Department of Public Safety, our goals can be summarized in four pillars:
- First, to increase the safety of Ohio's citizens, communities, and highways, and to protect Ohioans' quality of life;
- Second, we continue to form and strengthen collaborative relationships with safety partners, federal, state and local governmental entities and the private sector to ensure uncompromising quality, integrity, dedication to innovation, excellence in service and enhanced safety;
- Third, we are reinforcing a strong foundation for expedient, cost-effective services to the public; and
- Finally, where possible, we are making efforts to become more operational and less administrative.
- In one of your handouts we have included specific ways in which we have accomplished those four goals during the past biennium.
- Our priorities for funding decisions in the next biennium are the continued accomplishment of these goals and the advancement of programs that are essential for the continued safety and well-being of Ohio's citizens.

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- The Ohio Department of Public Safety is home to numerous innovations that have transformed the operational nature of our department and serve as nationally innovative models being examined and implemented in other states.
- I'd like to share several specific examples to illustrate that point.
- I'm cautioned by my staff to not bury the lead...so this is the foremost point I'd like to share:
- **As far back as records are available, during the past six-year period, we have achieved historically safer roads, seized more illegal drugs and witnessed greater reductions in violent crime than at any other time in Ohio history.**
- So, let me repeat that...
- **Over the past six years, Ohio roads are the safest they have ever been in our state's history.**
- **And it gets better – Over the past six years we have seized more illegal drugs than any other period in our state's history.**
- **And it gets better still – Over the past six years the violent crime rate in Ohio is the lowest it has ever been.**

- We have included a handout in your packet to document the point I just made.
- I want to go a little further on one of those accomplishments and tell you about the **Ohio State Highway Patrol's drug interdiction accomplishments and our statewide collaborative strategy.**
- **Every year since 2011, Ohio troopers have made significant increases in drug interdiction.** Since 2011, Ohio troopers have interdicted more than \$268 million in drugs and contraband with a correlated increase of more than 100 percent in drug arrests over the six-year period. Just in 2016, state troopers made more than 13,000 drug arrests.
- Among those cases, on February 16, 2016, Troopers stopped a 2013 Chevrolet Cruz for an expired registration on Interstate 70 in Preble County. Criminal indicators were observed, and a Patrol drug-sniffing canine alerted to the vehicle. A probable cause search revealed 59.5 pounds of brown powder heroin, **the largest heroin seizure in the Patrol's history.**

- **The largest methamphetamine seizure in the Patrol's history** occurred on December 2, 2016, through a traffic stop on Interstate 70, also in Preble County. A positive canine indication and probable cause search led to the discovery of 26.5 pounds of crystal methamphetamine.
- And on September 1, 2016, a Trooper stopped to assist a driver with a 2002 Chevrolet Suburban on Interstate 80 in Wood County. Criminal indicators were observed, and a consent search revealed 33,230 opiate pills, the largest scheduled prescription pill seizure in Patrol history.

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- In total, state troopers seized 168 pounds of heroin last year.
- This is a kilo of heroin; which is 2.2 pounds.
- This represents 10,000 unit doses of one of the most addictive and deadly drugs in Ohio and the United States.
- The state trooper who seized this heroin prevented 10,000 unit doses from making it into some community.
- Maybe this heroin was going to a first-time user who never got addicted.

- Maybe this heroin was going to a long-term addict who sought treatment because their drug wasn't available that day.
- So once again...this is 10,000 unit doses that never made it to an Ohio community.
- That's called success.
  
- So, how have we made such incredible increases over the past six years in interdicting drugs like this kilo of heroin?
- Under the leadership of Colonel Paul Pride, fundamentally, we were able to accomplish this by elevating criminal patrol to the same mission level as highway safety, fostering broad interagency partnerships and using shared information from our partners and the public.
- While operationally successful, the Patrol's methods are also a Constitutionally sound national model for a drug interdiction program.

- As part of my testimony, we have provided you with the Ohio State Highway Patrol's criminal patrol statistics which highlight the amazing success troopers have had in terms of removing dangerous, life-degrading drugs from our roadways and communities.
- We know we have disrupted the drug supply line to and through Ohio.
- The Patrol developed a collaborative called Prolonged Reduction of Threats by Enforcing Criminal Trends (PROTECT) Initiatives. In 2016, seven of these PROTECT Initiatives were conducted in counties that have seen dramatic increases in heroin/opiate overdoses and overdose deaths. The counties in which those initiatives were conducted included Cuyahoga, Ross, Athens, Columbiana, Hamilton (which was a Tri-State operation that included agencies from Indiana and Kentucky), Summit and Cuyahoga.
- Those seven special operations resulted in the seizure of 1,002 pounds of illegal drugs and 1,815 prescription pills.

- The Ohio State Highway Patrol currently has 11 officers assigned to both federal and local drug task forces, of which four of the officers are assigned to task forces that respond to overdoses and conduct trace back investigations, in an attempt to identify the person responsible for selling to the overdose victim.
- The Ohio State Highway Patrol works directly with the Drug Enforcement Administration Cleveland Task Force. On February 9 the Patrol will receive the Outstanding Opioid Investigative Effort Award from the DEA. This is a national award being presented to the Ohio State Highway Patrol – and to Ohio.
- According to the DEA, an Ohio state trooper was directly involved with taking down a major Mexican drug cartel that was importing large quantities of heroin, cocaine, marijuana and fentanyl from Juarez, Mexico to several U.S. cities, including Cleveland.
- **We're also doing more than ever in working with over 40 drug task forces in the state to bring about the first-ever integrated statewide drug interdiction, disruption strategy.**

- The 2016 – 2018 Drug Interdiction, Disruption and Reduction Plan for the Ohio Department of Public Safety builds on the successes achieved since 2011 with the development of a new phase in coordination with the Ohio National Guard, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and in cooperation with international, national, state and local agencies and task forces.
- The Plan contains strategies that further integrate multijurisdictional drug task forces into statewide interdiction efforts and provide the framework for greater collaboration between law enforcement and treatment providers.
- Other innovative features include better statewide reporting data to the El Paso Intelligence Center, utilization of Ohio National Guard Counterdrug Analysts to assist multijurisdictional drug task forces and other law enforcement partners, and doubling the Patrol’s number of drug-interdiction canines.
- But progress is not victory. We know we will ultimately overcome this epidemic by reducing demand. Through Governor and Mrs. Kasich’s *Start Talking, 5 Minutes for Life* program, state troopers, National Guard soldiers and local law enforcement officers are working together to get anti-drug and leadership messaging to Ohio high schools through a partnership with the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

- Since the program began in 2013, more than 106,000 students have heard the message and nearly 2,200 students have accepted a leadership responsibility by volunteering to be ambassadors of the anti-drug message within their respective schools.
- Also, a Mansfield Post trooper took it upon himself and created a resource pamphlet that is being distributed to county law enforcement agencies. The pamphlet contains quick reference for locating treatment facilities and is also provided to people seeking assistance with addiction.

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- When I took this job three and a half years ago, one of our priorities was, where possible, make efforts to become more operational and less administrative.
- **An illustrative example of that is what Executive Director Sima Merick has done at the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, where we have been able to regionalize and operate 24/7 with no additional facility costs and without hiring any additional personnel by using existing facilities and repurposing existing positions.**

- The benefits of this were fully realized last July as we incorporated the Emergency Management Assistance Compact for the Republican National Convention. And I will get to more of that in a moment.
- **At Ohio EMA, regionalization and a new 24/7 operational component provides valuable assistance to those in need faster than ever.** Our departmental efforts have also focused on improving the delivery of direct operational services while concurrently reducing administrative processes.
- We have fully implemented the *Safer Ohio Initiative* that incorporates a comprehensive strategy of emergency preparedness to enhance the state's readiness before an incident happens, during an incident and after an incident occurs.
- Having our staff out in the field, significantly reduces the time employees spend responding to an incident and increases their time working with local officials in their communities. In addition to faster response times, regionalization is resulting in a reduction in personnel overtime.

- Both operationally and fiscally we are more efficient with our resources because we have established regional offices at Ohio EMA. Our regional liaisons also play a central role in the Safe Ohio Teams program and ensure that we are meeting the needs of local communities.

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- Through those changes, we were positioned to directly work on another of our major Departmental goals – To increase the safety of Ohio’s citizens, communities and highways, and to protect Ohioans’ quality of life.
- I could not be prouder of the instrumental role from the Ohio Department of Public Safety in assisting the City of Cleveland during the Republican National Convention which resulted in the safest convention in modern history.
- **Our success in Cleveland last summer is now a national model for large event security through innovative use of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact – known as EMAC.**
- As you know, Cleveland hosted the Republican National Convention last July, which was the first National Special Security Event political convention since the 2013 Boston Bombing.

- It was also the first National Special Security Event that was a political convention in which the host city's law enforcement agency was under a federal consent decree.
- For the first-time ever for such an event, we used EMAC to bring more than 1,000 state law enforcement officers from 18 states to Cleveland. This multi-law enforcement coalition assembled for the RNC was unprecedented in Ohio and something never before seen at any previous national convention.
- Coordinated through the National Emergency Management Association, EMAC serves as the relational and legal glue between federal, state and local entities for moving people and resources. EMAC offers assistance during governor-declared states of emergency that allows states to send personnel, equipment and commodities to help disaster relief efforts in other states.
- Once the conditions for providing assistance to a requesting state have been set, the terms constitute a legally binding contractual agreement that makes affected states responsible for reimbursement.
- Without EMAC, many of the states that sent in the 1,000 out-of-state officers to work in Cleveland may not have participated in the detail.

- Ohio EMA Executive Director Merick and I have presented on this new national model for large event security at national conferences for the National Emergency Management Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- And before I move to something else, I also want you to know that Ohio Investigative Unit agents from our Department were utilized to assist uniformed officers and members of the Secret Service.
- And Intelligence sharing through Ohio Homeland Security's fusion center helped support the tactical operations and response throughout the Convention.

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- Another major goal of the Ohio Department of Public Safety is to continue to form and strengthen collaborative relationships with safety partners, federal, state and local governmental entities and the private sector to ensure uncompromising quality, integrity, dedication to innovation, excellence in service and enhanced safety.
- I am proud to say we are living up to that goal.

- **As a primary example, with the leadership from Executive Director Karhlton Moore, our Office of Criminal Justice Services has worked with 380 law enforcement agencies employing over 22,000 officers including agencies and officers in most of Ohio’s metropolitan areas, that are either certified or in the certification process.**
- **These agencies have joined Ohio’s efforts to strengthen community and police relations by adhering to new state standards that guide Ohio police officers.**
- **This means 67 percent of all Ohio’s full-time and part-time law enforcement officers now work for an agency that is certified, or in the process to become certified, on state standards for the use of force – including deadly force, and on recruiting and hiring.**
- **This accomplishment has been achieved in direct partnership with Governor Kasich’s Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board.**
- **And, as was recently noted by the National Governor’s Association, Ohio is a national leader in Community-Police Relations.**

- I am honored to co-chair the Ohio Collaborative with former state senator Nina Turner.
- What we are doing in Ohio is improving community-police relations and finding solutions to the tensions and concerns that divide too many neighborhoods and the law enforcement officers who serve them.
- Many of you were in Cleveland for the RNC in July and saw first-hand how our work in this key area offset many of the predictions of a contentious or even violent Convention.
- I'm going to quote Colonel Pride here, who summarized that week:
  - “You have to tip your hat to the people in the city of Cleveland and the leadership in that community. The clergy, elected officials and influential people in the city helped make the week what it was. We saw great collaboration with the people and leadership in the city.”
- I will tell you that would not have happened without the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board to oversee implementation of recommendations from the Ohio Task Force on Community-Police Relations Task Force.

- The Ohio Collaborative, which is a 12-person diverse panel, established state standards – for the first time in Ohio’s history – on August 28, 2015, for use of force, including use of deadly force, and agency employee recruitment and hiring.
- At their core, the new standards include the fundamental policy statement, the preservation of human life is of the highest value in the State of Ohio.
- Since passage of those first standards, the Collaborative has passed standards covering community engagement, body-worn cameras and law enforcement telecommunicator training.
- As we move forward to create a national model, the Ohio Collaborative is working closely with our partners, including the community and law enforcement agencies, to implement the new standards, certify agencies, provide resources and promote the positive work that is being done.
- I had the great privilege last October to present information about the Ohio Collaborative as a featured leadership track presentation at the International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference.

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- Another major goal at the Ohio Department of Public Safety is to reinforce a strong foundation for expedient, cost-effective services to the public.
- **To exemplify how we are achieving that goal, one need look no further than the beginning of this year when the Bureau of Motor Vehicles released the new Automated Title Processing System – known as ATPS – to the Clerks of Courts Title Offices, with little interruption in services.**
- **I want you to know this was an incredible accomplishment. The private sector tried to do this but could not deliver what was needed.**
- **And I promised this Committee we would get it completed on time and under budget. This project was successfully implemented in collaboration with our partners.**
- Another example is the BMV's expansion of customer access to full reinstatement services at all 190 Deputy Registrar license agencies – services which were previously only available at seven locations statewide.
- Through this innovation, customers are now able to reinstate their driver license and legally operate their vehicle on our roadways from their home communities.

- And beginning in July, through the leadership of Ohio BMV Registrar Petit, **Ohio will become the first state to pilot the use of simulators in driving testing as part of our Drive Toward a Safer Ohio initiative.**
- This multi-pronged approach represents the most comprehensive changes to Ohio's driver training, testing and safety efforts ever undertaken by the Ohio Department of Public Safety.
- The end result is Ohio will have the most comprehensive model in the country for driver safety training and testing – particularly youth driving.
- Also under the leadership of BMV Registrar Don Petit, when fully implemented, the complete Drive Toward a Safer Ohio plan will make Ohio a national leader in the way we educate and train novice drivers through Professional Development, Curriculum and Information Delivery, and Enforcement.

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- Over the past biennium, the Ohio Department of Public Safety has become more operational and direct in our service to Ohioans through a continued focus on our core mission when establishing priorities.

- As part of the Explosive Detection Canine Program, Ohio Homeland Security Executive Director Richard Zwayer has provided explosive-detection canines to seven Ohio universities. These canines were placed throughout the state to respond to bomb threats at universities, local schools and surrounding communities. They also support large events statewide and are available to local law enforcement upon request at no cost to the requesting agencies.
- The Explosive Detection Canine assigned to Ohio Homeland Security works statewide in support of universities, schools and local governments. K9 Khloe – who by the way has her own social media following – also supported large events such as the Arnold Classic in Columbus and the Major League Baseball All-Star Game in Cincinnati.
- Ohio Homeland Security has partnered with the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Higher Education in a collaborative effort to review school safety and campus safety plans statewide. The plans are being reviewed to ensure compliance with established safety plan requirements.
- There is no question that the work done in this area has saved lives.

- We assigned existing Infrastructure Protection Planners and Threat Assessment and Prevention Analysts to work with an Ohio Department of Education Analyst who has been assigned to the Strategic Analysis and Information Center.
- We also continue to directly contribute to safer Ohio schools with public tips leading to lives saved. Ohio schools also have access to a free statewide tip-line (844) SAFER-OH that allows students, staff, parents and other interested parties the ability to report suspicious or unsafe activity anonymously 24 hours a day by calling or texting, which may be the preferred means for many students. Tips are received by dedicated analysts and then collected, reviewed, analyzed and disseminated based upon the need in each call. More than 2,200 schools have registered for the tip-line. And that tip-line is saving lives.
- Without going into specifics which could impact security and safety, I can tell you that without a doubt, those efforts have saved the lives of students, teachers, and others.

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- The Fusion Center Intelligence Operations group relocated and consolidated with the EMA Watch Desk and Patrol's Hub.

- I want to next talk about how integrating our communications and intelligence operations is the very nature of successful collaboration between divisions and local communities.
- The Ohio State Highway Patrol's Hub is comprised of the Watch Desk, Intelligence, Statewide Dispatch Management and Threat Assessment and Prevention units.
- **Patrol Intel Unit analysts received over 10,000 requests in 2016 for the first time ever, representing a 70 percent increase from requests in 2015. In some of those requests, there is no doubt that a life was saved because of the expertise of one of our analysts.**

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- **And the Patrol's Aviation assets continue to be a force multiplier not just for state troopers, but for law enforcement agencies across the state. In fact, during 2015 and 2016 Patrol pilots flew 1,208 missions – of those 762 – equivalent to 63 percent of their overall missions – were in support of other agencies.**

- In one such instance on May 15, 2016, Patrol Aviation assisted the Carrol County Sheriff's Office with their search for a homicide suspect out of Harrison County. The suspects' jacket was located in a field by Forward Looking Infrared RADAR, and a positive K-9 track located the suspects hiding location nearby in tall weeds.
- And on November 26, 2015, Patrol Aviation was requested by the St. Clairsville Post to locate an Amber Alert vehicle with two children and their suicidal mother. Aviation located the vehicle North Bound on Interstate 77. Ground Units were directed to the vehicle, where the children were taken into protective custody and the mother was provided medical aid.

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- In order to be better prepared for damaging storms and power failures, EMA pre-positioned several large generators throughout the State. State teams of public employees including state troopers, National Guard members, Ohio Homeland Security and EMA representatives and the Ohio Department of Transportation were created to be deployed when communities need help. They send photos and videos to the Emergency Operations Center to provide a real-time overview of an incident scene.

- The Patrol's Dispatching Operations now dispatch for the State Fire Marshal's Office, Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Taxation.
- And the Strategic Analysis and Information Center is actively engaged in providing timely, accurate and actionable intelligence to a wide range of traditional and non-traditional public safety and homeland security partners across all levels of government.

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- There are other ways in which our department is providing national leadership and setting new levels of service that are contributing toward a safer Ohio and a safer nation.
- Our department, and our state, are fortunate to have antihuman trafficking coordinator Liz Ranade-Janis working on this important issue.
- **We have continued to combat human trafficking** by partnering with the John Glenn International Airport in Columbus to offer a human trafficking training video available to more than 220 airports.

- We also created a free online human trafficking training completed by over 2,600 professionals to date, and developed extensive toolkits and resources for identifying and serving victims of human trafficking for law enforcement, service providers and community organizations.
- Also, we added partnerships with programs such as Truckers Against Trafficking to train key industries and raise awareness.
- Another example is Ohio Homeland Security's **Ohio Public Private Partnership**, which has increased membership to more than 400 organizations. These organizations are able to utilize the newly implemented Emergency Partner Credentialing System which aids private-sector organizations with appropriate access to emergency areas struck by disaster.
- Something that exists today that did not exist before the last biennium came from our **Private Investigator Security Guard Services** component, led by Executive Director Geoff Dutton.
- We developed an online toolkit and training video to aid in response to an active aggressor incident. The materials were created specifically to be used by malls in Ohio and across the country to help local agencies become better prepared.

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- **And when it comes to holding those accountable for the tragedies that can come from impaired driving crashes, Ohio Investigative Unit** agents have continued efforts to conduct trace-back investigations related to arrests, incidents and injury and/or fatal crashes involving persons under the age of 21.
- Over the past biennium, it has been great to see local law enforcement becoming more aware of the Ohio Investigative Unit's trace-back program and the steps they need to take for an investigation to be conducted in their jurisdiction. This is a result of regular meetings between Investigative Unit agents and local law enforcement. The Ohio Investigative Unit is one of the top liquor law enforcement agencies in the country actively conducting trace-back type investigations.
- **And you should also be aware that Ohio Investigative Unit agents also investigate individuals and businesses who commit fraudulent activity with their food stamp benefits.** The food stamp program is designed to help families provide nutritious food for their children. However, some families are selling their benefits to purchase items not approved, including beer, cigarettes, weapons and even drugs.

- Agents work closely with federal and state partners to combat the fraudulent acts of selling or accepting benefits for cash or unauthorized goods. Agents have also investigated food stamp crimes involving money laundering and telecommunications fraud as well, all of which misuse taxpayers' money.
- I also want to highlight the leadership of Executive Director Mel House with **Ohio Emergency Medical Services.**
- Ohio EMS has recently overhauled its Online Certification Renewal System and launched a new training and equipment grant program for first responder agencies with the most need.
- **And in everyone's best interests, we have worked to make not only our department's facilities, but other state facilities, much safer and more secure.** I know many of you have noticed these upgrades at the Statehouse, Rhodes and Riffe buildings.
- At the Ohio Statehouse, employees and visitors are now guided through an updated security procedure which includes a metal detecting scan prior to entry, and backpacks are now prohibited. Security upgrades to the Rhodes State Office Tower and Vern Riffe Center include employees and visitors entering through a turnstile to gain access to main elevators.

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- At the Ohio Department of Public Safety, our employees recognize that our collective responsibility is to protect Ohio's citizens, and that this can only be accomplished through a strong commitment and collaboration with public and private sector representatives throughout the state to coordinate programs that maintain the safety and security of Ohio's citizens and critical infrastructure.
- This past biennium has been marked by numerous investments in safety to protect Ohioans and to protect our own employees. We are making significant progress toward a safer Ohio.
- **As I conclude my testimony today**, at every opportunity, the employees representing our six divisions have led unprecedented accomplishments. Our collective work serves as a blueprint and foundation for the future.
- I know we have an even greater opportunity to contribute to a safer Ohio in the next biennium. As you undertake the important work of considering our budget, I encourage you to keep in mind the question we ask each of our employees across Ohio every day on every shift ... what will you do to contribute to a safer Ohio?

- Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Ryan, Ranking Minority Member Cera and Members of the House Finance Committee, I again thank you for today's opportunity to testify on behalf of the Ohio Department of Public Safety. Representatives from our senior staff are here, and we will attempt to answer any of your questions.

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