

**Ohio Department of Public Safety  
Testimony of Director John Born  
Senate Finance - General Government and Agency Review Subcommittee  
May 11, 2017**

Chairman Jordan, Vice Chairman O'Brien and members of the Senate Finance General Government and Agency Review Subcommittee: I am John Born, Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety. It is an honor to appear before you again today to testify on the budget for the Ohio Department of Public Safety.

Our priorities for funding decisions in the next biennium are directed toward the advancement of programs that are essential for the continued safety and well-being of Ohio's citizens.

Today, I am going to have Executive Director Sima Merick from the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and Executive Director Karhlton Moore from the Office of Criminal Justice Services provide you with more detailed information about their respective divisions. Before they come up, I would like to tell you about some significant accomplishments at Ohio Homeland Security to keep our state, and nation, safe.

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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.

There is also an explosive detection canine assigned to Ohio Homeland Security that works statewide in support of universities, schools and local governments.

K9 Khloe – who by the way has her own social media following – also supports large events such as the annual Arnold Classic in Columbus and the 2015 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 by addressing public tips leading to lives saved. Ohio schools 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. Tips are received by dedicated analysts and then reviewed, analyzed and disseminated based upon the need in each call. More than 2,200 schools have registered for the tip-line.

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.

The Fusion Center Intelligence Operations group relocated and consolidated with the Ohio EMA Watch Desk and the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Hub. By integrating our communications and intelligence operations, we have seen greater collaboration between divisions and local communities.

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

We saw the benefits of that intelligence sharing through Ohio Homeland Security's fusion center as their staff helped support the tactical operations and response throughout the Republican National Convention.

Finally, Ohio Homeland Security's **Ohio Public Private Partnership, known as OP3**, has increased membership to more than 400 organizations. All OP3 organizations are also able to utilize the newly implemented Emergency Partner Credentialing System which aids private-sector organizations in obtaining appropriate access to emergency areas struck by disaster.

One of our priorities at the Ohio Department of Public Safety is, where possible, make efforts to become more operational and less administrative. To illustrate a way in which we have become operational, I would like to have Executive Director Sima Merick come up and talk briefly about advancements at the Ohio Emergency Management Agency.

**(Executive Director Merick)**

At Ohio EMA 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.

Regionalization and our 24/7 operational component allows us to provide 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.

Our success in Cleveland last summer with respect to the Republican National Convention, which resulted in the safest convention in modern history, is now a national model for large event security through innovative use of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact – known as EMAC.

The Republican National Convention last July 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-agency 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.

Along with Director Born, we 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.

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In addition to this, and in order to be better prepared for damaging storms and power failures, EMA pre-positioned several large generators throughout the state.

And finally, 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.

These are just some of the ways we have become more operational and are responding to be ready at Ohio EMA every day.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on behalf of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. At this point, I would like to introduce my colleague, Executive Director Karlton Moore from the Office of Criminal Justice Services.

**(Executive Director Moore)**

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, the Office of Criminal Justice Services has worked with more than 500 law enforcement agencies employing over 27,000 officers, in all 88 counties and most of Ohio's metropolitan departments, 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 80 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 recruitment 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. 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.

The calm seen in Cleveland last summer during the Republican National Convention probably 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.

The Ohio Collaborative, which is a 12-person diverse panel, established state standards on August 28, 2015 – for the first time in Ohio's history – for the 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, law enforcement telecommunicator training and bias free policing.

As we move forward to create a national model, the Office of Criminal Justice Services and Ohio Collaborative will work 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 also want to mention anti-human trafficking coordinator Liz Ranade-Janis and the work she is doing. We have continued to combat human trafficking through extensive training and technical assistance partnerships, such as partnering with the John Glenn International Airport in Columbus to offer a human trafficking training video available to more than 220 airports.

Additionally, our team created free online human trafficking training, which has been completed by over 3,340 professionals for continuing education credit. We have also developed toolkits and resources to assist law enforcement, service providers, prosecutors and community organizations in their efforts to identify and serve victims of human trafficking.

And we continue to add partnerships with key industries in a position to assist potential victims, such as working with Truckers Against Trafficking to raise awareness.

Those are just a few ways the Office of Criminal Justice Services is working to make Ohio a safer place. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Office of Criminal Justice Services.

I'll now turn things back over to Director Born.

**(Director Born)**

Chairman Jordan, Vice Chairman O'Brien and members of the Senate Finance General Government and Agency Review Subcommittee, that concludes our formal testimony.

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 are available to answer any of your questions.