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The Honorable Jim Butler
Chairman of House Judiciary Committee
77 South High, 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Butler:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senators Jones' and Hughes' legislation – Substitute Senate Bill 13 – that extends the statute of limitations for rape and sexual battery cases.

In December 2011, my office created our Sexual Assault Kit Testing Initiative to encourage law enforcement agencies from all across the state to submit to our Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) any untested sexual assault kits -- regardless of how old the kits may be -- for free lab analysis if they believed a crime had occurred. As of May 1, 2015, a total of 170 law enforcement agencies in Ohio have submitted BCI 9,643 rape kits to BCI for testing. Forensic scientists at our lab have completed testing on a total of 7,211 rape kits so far, which has led to 2,692 hits in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). In Cuyahoga County, alone, more than 300 defendants have been indicted as a result of this effort.

Substitute Senate Bill 13, when coupled with the General Assembly's work in the previous legislative session, provides another tool for law enforcement and prosecutors to keep our communities safe by extending the time to bring criminals to justice. I applaud the sponsors of this bill for introducing this important legislation, the members of this committee for their diligent work, and the many victims for having the courage to step forward with their support.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to address this vital issue.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General