



Taft Signs SORN Bill

Gov. Bob Taft Thursday signed **SB5**-Jacobson, the new Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORN) bill, also known as Megan's Law. The bill strengthens Ohio's Megan's Law and implements the recommendations of the SORN Task Force, a group Taft formed in September 2002 to review the law in the wake of 14-year-old Kristen Jackson's murder in Wayne County. Taft was joined at the bill signing by Kristen Jackson's family, bill sponsor Sen. Jeff Jacobson (R-Dayton), Attorney General Jim Petro and members of the task force.

"**SB5** incorporates virtually all of the recommendations produced by the task force and ensures that Ohio's SORN law remains one of the toughest in the country," Taft said. "Kristen Jackson's death prompted many people to work very hard for positive change and I hope that these changes bring some comfort to her family."

Kristen Jackson was murdered in 2002 by a convicted sex offender who had moved into her neighborhood without her family's knowledge. After the murder, the governor asked his chief legal counsel, Judith French, to lead a working group to review the state's Megan's Law, which required mandatory registration of sex offenders and corresponding community notification, and to make recommendations on how to strengthen it. The working group included then Attorney General Betty Montgomery, Rehabilitation and Correction Director Reginald Wilkinson, judges, county prosecutors, law enforcement officers and victim advocate representatives. The group released its report recommending changes to strengthen the law in January 2003.

SB5 strengthens the state's SORN law by:

- Expanding the number of offenses defined as "sexually oriented offenses" under the law;

- Subjecting repeat sex offenders to lifetime registration and community notification requirements;
- Creating stiffer penalties for offenders who fail to register;
- Requiring an offender who is subject to registration requirements to register in the county in which the offender works or goes to school; and
- Creating a statewide Internet database of sex offenders.

SB5 contains an emergency clause and goes into effect immediately upon the governor's signature and filing with the secretary of state.

OCJS and Buckeye Sheriffs Announce Searchable SORN Websites

The Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) has partnered with the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association (BSSA) to create searchable sex offender websites for the 49 sheriffs' office currently without these sites or the technology to host them.

OCJS and BSSA announced the creation of the websites in connection with Gov. Bob Taft's signing of **SB5**-Jacobson, a law that will strengthen Ohio's existing Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORN) law. (See related story.)

The website design will allow instant community access to information regarding registered sex offenders living in their area. While each sheriff's office will have its own SORN site, plans include linking the databases for a single statewide search on any sex offender in Ohio. With technology and funding provided by OCJS, all of Ohio's sheriffs will have searchable, online SORN registries by fall of 2003.

New Report Recommends Same-Day Voter Registration

With just four months before local elections in November, a new report from Policy Matters Ohio shows that the state could increase voter participation by implementing election day registration (EDR). "Election Day Registration: Expanding the Ohio Vote" reveals that the six states with EDR have eight to 15 percent higher voter turnout than the national average and have seen increases since implementing the reform. Under EDR, citizens can register and vote at their polling places or at an official centralized location on election day after providing proof of identity and residency.

Ohio had a higher percentage of voter turnout (55.8 percent) than the national average (51.3 percent) in 2000, but still fell roughly 4- to 13-percentage points below turnouts in five of the six states with EDR. The report estimates that same-day registration would produce an average 7-percentage point jump in the number of voters nationwide, increasing registration in presidential elections by 8.54 million people. Some 51 percent of eligible Americans -- or 80 million -- did not vote in the 2000 presidential election.

The Ohio report is adapted from a national report by Demos, a national research institute devoted to democracy issues. The reports argue that early voter registration deadlines contribute to low voter turnouts. The number of national poll respondents who report giving "quite a lot" of thought to elections jumps from 59 percent in September to 75 percent in late October, by which point Ohio's registration deadline has passed.

Projected average voter turnout under EDR is 59 percent, while the average with a typical 30-day registration deadline is just 53 percent, according to the Policy Matters report. EDR states -- Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and Wyoming -- have seen increases in voter turnout since implementing EDR. In the 2000 election, four of the states with the top ten voter turnouts were EDR states, and all but Idaho exceeded Ohio in voter turnout.

EDR was defeated by a wide margin in an initiative vote in Ohio in 1977. Ironically, an estimated 380,000 voters used same-day registration in the election that would overturn the bill. Restoring EDR would require an amendment to Article V of the state constitution.

Younger citizens and those with less schooling, lower incomes and poorer jobs are less likely to vote than older, more educated and more affluent Americans. Easing registration could diversify voting. "Election Day Registration could help bring thousands of nonvoting Ohioans to the polls in upcoming elections," said Michelle Smith, report author. "Increasing voter turnout in Ohio would strengthen our democracy and strengthen our society."

To view the full report, go to www.policymattersohio.org/election_day_registration.htm.

Report Finds Many More Children Insured, Thanks to Medicaid/SCHIP

A government health insurance program has dramatically reduced the number of uninsured children in the U.S. over the last three years, a survey by The Urban Institute has found. The number of children without health insurance declined by 1.8 million and the percentage fell by 2.6 percentage points between 1999 and the end of 2002, thanks largely to increased participation in Medicaid/ State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

The improvement was concentrated among low-income children (those with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) and Hispanic and African-American children, but there were gains for white children as well.

The study used the National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) to examine changes in insurance coverage and service use among children age 18 and under from 1999 to 2002. The 1999 data reflect a very early point in the expansion of coverage for children under SCHIP and in the outreach and enrollment simplification effort in both Medicaid and SCHIP. The later data reflect more established SCHIP programs. ([article continues](#))

The survey found that:

- In 2002, 7.8 million children were uninsured, a decline of 1.8 million from 1999. The share of uninsured children fell from 12.6 to 10.1 percent. Over the same period, an additional 4.8 million children were covered by Medicaid or SCHIP, bringing the total number covered by these programs to 17.4 million in 2002. Of the 7.8 million children without health insurance in 2002, more than four million appear to be eligible for either Medicaid or SCHIP coverage.
- Nearly 80 percent of the documented decrease in "uninsurance" is due to declines in the uninsurance rate among low-income children. The share of low-income children without coverage declined by 5.7 percentage points, but there was no statistically significant change for higher-income children. Nevertheless, low-income children were still three times as likely as higher income children to be uninsured.
- While rates of insurance under Medicaid and SCHIP were increasing over the period, low-income children experienced a 6.4 percent decline in employer sponsored insurance (ESI) over this period. The survey's authors were unable to determine if this decline was reflective of a general erosion of ESI versus how much was due to Medicaid/SCHIP coverage substituting for ESI.
- Declines in uninsurance were greater for black and Hispanic children than for white children (4.8 and 4.2 percentage points, respectively, compared to 2.0 percentage points) and were related to larger increases in public coverage among black and Hispanic children (9.2 and 10.8 percentage points, respectively) than white children (3.9 percentage points).
- In 2002, Medicaid and SCHIP were providing health insurance to 43.2 percent of black children and 35.6 percent of Hispanic children. The uninsurance rate for black children was 2.4 percentage points higher than for white children, but Hispanic children remain nearly three times as likely as white children to be uninsured.
- Over the period studied, the gap between insurance rates for low-income parents and their children increased. By the end of 2002, low-income parents were more than twice as likely as low-income children to be uninsured.
- The proportion of children receiving well-child care rose from 65.2 to 68.6 percent; the proportion receiving office visits rose from 82.4 to 84.8 percent; and the proportion receiving dental care rose from 78.9 to 80.5 percent.
- Children covered by Medicaid/SCHIP are about 1.5 times more likely than uninsured children to receive well-child care, office visits and dental care.

The Urban Institute report argues that preserving the documented gains and covering eligible children who remain uninsured will hinge on maintaining Medicaid and SCHIP eligibility levels and continuing to improve outreach, enrollment and retention, but the budget woes facing states may make it difficult to build on the momentum established over the period studied.

The study notes that although few states have made large-scale cutbacks in their programs for children, many states have slowed expansions for parents, reduced outreach activities or erected more enrollment barriers -- or plan to do so. The study concludes, "Retrenchment of public programs combined with the sluggish economy could stall progress and even reverse children's gains in coverage, which in turn would likely harm the health and well-being of America's children."

HANF Proposal Gets Hammered

Housing Assistance for Needy Families (HANF), a proposed reform of the Section 8 housing program, took a drubbing at a Tuesday U.S. House Subcommittee field hearing in Columbus. Under the proposal, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) would allocate funds to the 50 states, instead of to the

2,600 public housing authorities as under current law. This funding shift would give states more control over the voucher program by allowing them to contract with public housing agencies or other entities of their choice.

U.S. Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-Columbus), a member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, said that the Section 8 program serves more than two million people nationwide and 10,000 in Columbus through the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority. Tiberi said he opposes HANF because, "I believe recent proposals to the Section 8 program will destabilize it by shifting responsibilities to the states by converting them into block grants. This idea will not be effective because states have only limited experience with such programs, and the last thing that the CMHA needs is another layer of bureaucracy, which is the certain outcome if these proposals are put into effect."

Tiberi conceded that the Section 8 program loses \$2 billion annually to fraud and other factors, but, he said, "The best solution for Section 8 is to give more flexibility to the local housing agencies. These local agencies, along with elected officials, landlords, and other interested parties could work together to ensure Section 8 provides the proper assistance." Tiberi said it is a simple idea to let residents address their own local problems.

Columbus Mayor Mike Coleman reiterated Tiberi's position saying, "I believe that the proposal to block-grant the Section 8 Voucher Program to the states should not be enacted. The Section 8 Voucher Program, administered through our local public housing authority, is the most effective way to ensure that local families' housing needs are addressed." Coleman said giving administration of the program to the state would "not necessarily be less expensive" and he impugned the delivery process saying "it would only add additional administrative requirements, not streamline or replace them."

Affordable housing advocates, like Bill Faith, Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), underscored their distaste for HANF by painting it as a misguided effort that would radically restructure the Housing Choice Voucher program. Faith argued that HANF would: 1) almost certainly result in a devaluing of the program, based on the fact that housing costs have been increasing much faster than the rate of inflation, 2) states would be encouraged to serve higher income people because the proposal would require states to serve the same number of people whether or not federal funding remained the same, 3) open the way for states to impose time limits on households' voucher use, 4) add an extra layer of bureaucracy to the program and likely politicize it as states would have more say in determining which communities received the vouchers, and 5) because the state doesn't have on-going rental-assistance programs, it would be entirely ill equipped to administer the program.

Dennis Guest, executive director of the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), an organization that is responsible for 3,814 units and the administration of 9,732 Section 8 vouchers, also stated his opposition to HANF. He said he opposes the reform because: 1) 76 percent of his clients are seniors, disabled or pensioners, the coupling of HANF with TANF is weak and ill-considered, 2) that local control has already reached levels of "customization" not possible through a state-administered program, and 3) the transition of the voucher program to a state block grant program would be a time consuming burden.

According to The Budget Committee Briefing Book on the President's Budget, total funding for both the new block grant plus project-based assistance for FY04 is proposed to be \$17.1 billion, an increase of \$700 million over the 2003 request. Of the 2004 amount, \$12.5 billion would fund the new HANF block grant, while \$4.5 billion would be provided in project-based assistance.

The president's proposed block grant would be designed to align the program more closely with the nation's primary welfare program, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families block grant (TANF) in areas like eligibility and administration. In addition, it seeks to better assist low-income households in locating safe and affordable housing by allowing states to tailor their programs to fit the needs of particular communities. For example, states with large cities which have expensive rental housing could maintain a higher rent ceiling for those areas. ([article continues](#))

HANF is expected to increase the use of Section 8 funds, since many persons who currently obtain Section 8 vouchers cannot use them if they do not find suitable housing before the certificate expires. Last year, more than \$1.7 billion worth of vouchers went unused by Public Housing Authorities for this and other reasons. Under the proposed block grant, states will be required to serve at least as many households as are currently served by the section 8 voucher program.

Miami County Municipal Court Employers Cited For Theft

Auditor of State Betty Montgomery Thursday issued findings for recovery against two Miami County Municipal Court clerks for theft in office. The findings were part of Miami County's annual audit report and have been repaid to the county. The employees involved face criminal charges.

The findings were against two Miami County Municipal Court employees who were both responsible for processing funds being received by the court. The thefts were initially discovered by the Miami County Sheriff's Office, and investigated further as part of the regular audit of the county by Montgomery's office.

"Miami County residents should be proud of the way elected officials handled this situation," Montgomery said. "They detected the problem, called in our staff and ultimately got the stolen money returned to the public treasury. We hope the swift action to recover the money and prosecute those responsible sends a strong message to anyone tempted to abuse public dollars."

The audit issued a finding for recovery in the amount of \$1,039 against Jennifer Humphreys, a clerk in the Miami County Municipal Court Office. Humphreys was responsible for processing court costs and fine money received from Tipp City Police Department, West Milton Police Department, and the Miami County Sheriff's Office. Humphreys confessed to stealing \$1,039 in cash prior to processing and has since repaid the full amount to the county. Charges of theft in office are forthcoming from the Miami County Prosecutor's Office.

A separate finding was issued in the amount of \$885.02 against Tina M. Thorton, a former clerk in the Auto Title Division of the court. Thorton was responsible for processing money received for auto titles. Thorton confessed to stealing \$885.02 in cash prior to processing and has since repaid the full amount to the county. She was charged with and convicted of theft in office.

County officials, through an existing system of checks and balances, first identified the two unrelated thefts. They then asked the Auditor of State's Office to examine in more detail certain transactions within the court as part of the annual audit.

A copy of the full audit is available online at www.auditor.state.oh.us.

New Two-Student Driver Education Rule Taking Effect

Beginning Thursday, two students will be permitted in a car with an instructor during in-car driver instruction training. This move is being authorized by the Department of Public Safety (ODPS), which assumed oversight of driver education from the Department of Education (ODE), as a result of the passage of **124-HB407**.

Under the new rule, driving schools are allowed to have two students during in-car instruction; one student driving, and one student observing. Observation time does not count toward the eight hours of required driving time for each student. Under the old rule, two students were only permitted to be in the car for brief periods of time when picking up or dropping off one of the students.

Schools are expected to benefit from this new two-student rule because they will have the flexibility of providing private instruction or semi-private instruction to students. Students will also benefit by being in the car observing during another student's instructional driving time.

"Our driver training program will continue to work closely with school districts, commercial driver training schools and instructors, and parents to ensure young people are receiving the necessary training in order to be safe drivers," Kenneth L. Morckel, ODPS director said. "The new two-student rule is expected to have a

positive impact on driver instruction and education, which in the end will lead to safer drivers on Ohio roadways."

Assistance Available for Weather Victims in Columbiana County

Gov. Bob Taft Thursday announced that disaster assistance is available through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) for victims of the recent floods and severe weather in Columbiana County, one of 14 counties now eligible to provide such funds.

"We continue to work hard to help affected Ohioans," Taft said. "This funding is available immediately to help families recover."

Flood victims residing in Columbiana County may apply for one of two types of disaster assistance: families may qualify for up to \$1,500 in disaster assistance, and qualified elderly and disabled individuals may qualify for up to \$750 in disaster assistance.

In order to be eligible for up to \$1,500 in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) disaster assistance money, families must include a minor child, or pregnant woman, and have evidence of economic need. Elderly and disabled individuals in these counties who are not eligible for TANF assistance may be eligible for one-time cash assistance of up to \$750. Persons at least 55 years old and childless or receiving certain disability benefits who can provide evidence of economic need created by the impact of the storm are eligible for this assistance, but only one payment may be made per dwelling.

Each year, ODJFS reserves \$5 million in TANF funding for disaster victims in counties declared in a state of emergency. Applications will be accepted at the Columbiana County Department of Job and Family Services, 110 Nelson Avenue, Lisbon, 44432, 330/424-1471.

OWDA Elects Board Officers, Makes Loans, Authorizes Bond Sale

The Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) Thursday elected two new board members, approved a laundry list of financing for Ohio communities, and authorized the sale of Rural Development Loan notes.

The board re-elected John D. McClure as chairman and Lessie Milton Jones as vice chairman, and added to the board Debbie Batta, training director for Health Management Solutions, who was present, and Brian Hicks, Gov. Bob Taft's former chief of staff, who was not present. Hicks will leave his position in the governor's office at the end of the month.

In other business, OWDA approved fresh water loans for the small communities of Burgoon (\$86,650 -- Sandusky Co.), Delphos (\$1.7 million -- Allen Co.), and Lithopolis (\$3 million -- Fairfield Co.). Approved projects for OWDA's community assistance program went to Byesville (\$477,656 -- Guernsey Co.), Chauncey (\$450,000 -- Athens Co.), Muskingum County (\$494,502), North Baltimore (\$420,000 -- Wood Co.), Pebbles (\$55,100 -- Adams Co.). Projects approved for Local Economic Development Program funding went to Mahoning County (\$990,000), Orwell (\$368,000 -- Ashtabula Co.), Stark Co. Port Authority (\$2.11 million).

Successful candidates in the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund were Metropolitan Sewer District (\$7.95 million and \$2.09 million -- Hamilton Co.), Columbus (\$7.26 million and \$1.3 million -- Franklin Co.), Phillipsburg (\$20,000 -- Montgomery Co.), Montgomery Co. (\$2.9 million), Oregon (\$3.4 million -- Lucas Co.), Perrysville (\$138,201 -- Ashtabula Co.), Cambridge (\$891,120 -- Guernsey Co.)

OWDA also authorized the sale of \$21.5 million of rural development "adjustable rate water revenue notes" through National City Bank, with Bricker & Eckler serving as bond counsel. Fund proceeds will be used to refund outstanding notes, reimburse OWDA for previous expenditures, increase the new loan fund balance. Other financial highlights showed that OWDA issued \$73 million in freshwater loans in 2002, and that it has received 99.7 percent of \$129 million in loan repayments, and local government agency program has \$17 million available to loan. ([article continues](#))

Steve Grossman, OWDA's executive director, said his organization has provided over \$50 million in Rural Development program financing, and \$8 million each year in interim financing. He also said OWDA, much to his surprise, now has a seat on the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority, which has recently absorbed the Ohio Coal Development Office.

Coal Advisory Council Approves \$113.3 Million at Final Meeting

The Ohio Coal Development Office (OCDO), which for nearly 20 years has provided approximately \$170 million in state funding as financial assistance for clean coal research, development and deployment of emerging technologies ranging from applied research through pilot and demonstration projects, held its last meeting before being absorbed by the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA).

OCDO, which has four staffers, will move August 14 to join OAQDA's office and five staffers as the result of an obscure amendment in the states budget bill (**HB95**) that sought a more appropriate place for OCDO to work from other than its historic host, the Ohio Department of Development.

As a part of its final meeting agenda, OCDO heard from four presenters, each with enough powerpoint slides to dazzle the small group of onlookers. Each received approval for his proposals. OCDO's Technical Advisory Committee's recommendations will be forwarded to the OAQDA, where negotiations and project fine tunings will take place, followed by the promulgation of a legal contract that will then serve to greenlight the commencement of the projects in full. The projects to be forwarded to OAQDA are:

1. Battelle's Midwest Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership Project that requested funding \$100,000, with total project costs of \$2.4 million.
2. Ohio Coal Research Consortium of six universities that requested \$1.2 million, with \$485,000 in cost sharing.
3. Energy Industries of Ohio that requested \$112,000 with total project costs of \$654,000.
4. A.F.B.C/Cedar Lane Farms requested \$75,000 with a total project cost of \$276,000.

Mike Shanahan, executive director of the OAQDA said he anticipated the transition process to be seamless, and that new space for both his agency and OCDO's would be operational by August 18. He also said "strategic discussions" will take place regarding making the two agencies work efficiently and that a possible result of these talks would be a third-party assessment of OCDO's research and development program.

Petro Announces Statewide Effort to Help Notify Victims of Crime

Praising the collaborative efforts of county sheriffs and prosecutors, Attorney General Jim Petro Thursday announced that offender information is now available to victims, concerned citizens, and law enforcement in all of Ohio's 88 counties.

"For years it seemed that the rights of the offender outweighed the rights of the victims," Petro said. "With members of the law enforcement community in all 88 counties now participating in this important project we will help more victims of crime."

Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE), is an automated service that provides inmate information over the telephone and allows those who register to be notified when that offender is released or transferred anytime, day or night. This free statewide service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in English and in Spanish.

Information is collected from all 88 counties and is made available through a computerized notification system. This system tracks offenders incarcerated in both adult and youth correctional facilities and county jails; is transferred from one jail to another; dies while in custody; or is scheduled for a court hearing.

"This automated service allows victims to be informed and involved in very important matters related to their cases, empowering victims and helping them move forward with their lives," Petro said.

Registration is confidential. The caller will remain anonymous. ([article continues](#))

For more information on VINE call 1-800/770-0192.

VINE is provided by Ohio Attorney General Jim Petro, the Buckeye State Sheriffs Association, the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the Ohio Department of Youth Services. It is funded by the federal Victims of Crime Act grant.

Insurance Department Piloting Senior Stop Smoking Program

Director Ann Womer Benjamin announced Thursday that Ohio is one of seven states participating in the Medicare Stop Smoking Program, a demonstration project aimed at identifying the most successful approaches to help more than 140,000 Ohioans age 65 or older to stop smoking.

"The Ohio Department of Insurance and its Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIP) is joining the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to pilot the Medicare Stop Smoking Program because we both have a common interest in helping people live longer, healthier lives," Womer Benjamin said. "We need to bring down the cost of health care, and Medicare expenditures for smoking-related illnesses alone are estimated to be about \$800 billion between 1995 and 2015."

Studies indicate that smoking cessation is beneficial at any age, even for a person smoking for many years. Long time smokers experience rapid improvements in breathing and circulation, decreased risk of heart disease and stroke, and an overall improvement in their quality of life.

To participate in the program, older smokers can call 1-800/65-BEGIN (1-866/652-3446) to determine their eligibility. To be eligible for the program, smokers must be 65 years or older, have Medicare Part B coverage, obtain their benefits through original Medicare fee-for-service, and must enroll by the end of October.

The Medicare Stop Smoking Program is available to Ohioans for 12 months after they enroll in the program. Results from the program to identify the most effective quitting strategy will be available in 2004. With approval from Congress, the project's findings may result in a stop smoking benefit under Medicare.

OhioReads Offers Back-to-School Workshops

OhioReads will offer a series of free Back-to-School workshops throughout the state in August for educators, program coordinators and volunteers to learn about changes in program requirements and ways to maximize funding. The OhioReads Back-to-School Workshops will help schools best use their limited resources to ensure that all students improve their reading skills.

"The greatest education challenge we face today is making sure that every child in Ohio learns how to read, and I applaud the dedication of the OhioReads educators, tutors, volunteer coordinators, business and community partners, and parents who all play a critical role in ensuring that students have the skills they need to succeed," Gov. Bob Taft said.

The workshops will cover new funding information, strategies for making the most of grant funding, steps for reporting data, volunteer recruitment and how to build and sustain a successful program so all children can excel in reading. An optional second session will be a workshop for OhioReads tutor trainers. Principals, teachers, building volunteer coordinators, district administrators and volunteers with the OhioReads program are invited to attend these valuable workshops. OhioReads business and community partners also are encouraged to attend.

Good reading skills are crucial for students to succeed throughout their education. OhioReads was established in 1999 to improve the reading skills of students in kindergarten through fourth grade and help them excel academically after elementary school. Currently, 1,900 Ohio elementary schools participate in the OhioReads program with more than 45,000 volunteers providing individual and small group tutoring to more than 100,000 students each year.

For more information on the workshops or the OhioReads program, visit www.ohioreads.org, or call 1-888-OHIOREADS.

BMV Celebrates 25 Years of Participation at The Ohio State Fair

This year the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) will celebrate 25 years of providing driver services at the Ohio State Fair.

"We are very proud to take part in the fair each year," said Registrar Frank Caltrider. "We are looking forward to another 25 years of participating in the fair. Our employees love it and so do the drivers of Ohio."

Once again this year the license agency will be issuing licenses, ID cards, vehicle registrations, selling driving abstracts and conducting free vision screenings. A "Get Personalized" terminal will also be available for customers to look up personalized plate combinations. The employees will also be able to answer questions from the public.

During the 2002 state fair, the BMV:

- Issued 670 driver licenses
- Issued 41 state identification cards
- Issued 183 vehicle registrations
- Completed 249 driver abstracts
- Completed 249 vision screenings
- Completed 227 voter registrations

The 2003 Ohio State Fair runs Aug. 1 - 17. The BMV will be located in the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) booth, in the Northeast corner of the Bricker Building. The license agency will be open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. Also located in the ODPS booth this year will be ODPS Administration, the Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Medical Services, Homeland Security, the Investigative Unit and the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Bocchieri Honored By NCSL

At last week's meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in San Francisco, 20 state legislators and legislative staff from 15 states were honored for their military service in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Among those honored was Rep. John Bocchieri (D-Middletown), a captain in the Air Force Reserve. Oklahoma Sen. Angela Monson, then-president of NCSL, dedicated the annual meeting's opening session to the "heroes among our ranks, civic soldiers who play a very unique role in our homeland democracy."

EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

Governor Signs Bill

SB5 SORN (JACOBSON J) Regarding the state's sex offender registration and community notification system. The bill contains an emergency clause and goes into effect immediately upon the governor's signature and filing with the secretary of state.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS

HOUSE

BILLS INTRODUCED 07/31/03

- HB255** SECURITY FALSE ALARMS (SETZER, A) Increase the charges for responding in townships to certain security alarm system false alarms and to earmark the moneys a township so collects for police services.
- HB256** MERGER LAW (SETZER, A) To revise the Merger Law.
- HB257** DEATH CERTIFICATES (CLANCY, P) Regarding the information included on death certificates.

(legislative actions continues)

SENATE

THERE WERE NO BILLS INTRODUCED 07/31/03

**The House
adjourned until
Tuesday,
August 5, 2003
at 11:00 a.m.
Nonvoting Session**

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**The Senate
adjourned until
Tuesday,
August 5, 2003
at 9:30 a.m.
Nonvoting Session**