

NEWS RELEASE



Governor Bob Taft

**TAFT RECOGNIZES TWO OHIOANS
WHO HELPED ABDUCTED CHILDREN GET HOME SAFELY
National AMBER Alert Conference Being Held in Columbus**

COLUMBUS (September 8, 2004) – Governor Taft today recognized two Ohioans who were instrumental in the safe recovery of missing or abducted children during remarks at the National AMBER Alert Conference in Columbus.

“We have seen first hand that the AMBER Alert system in Ohio works,” Taft said. “Thankfully, every AMBER Alert activated in Ohio has resulted in the safe recovery of the missing or abducted children. I encourage Ohioans to continue their vigilance and work with law enforcement in responding to activated AMBER Alerts.”

Taft recognized Paul Bursey and Dan Ellis, whose response to AMBER Alerts resulted in the successful recovery of missing or abducted children. Mr. Bursey called 9-1-1 when he spotted a vehicle matching a description off an AMBER Alert message displayed on an Ohio Department of Transportation freeway sign. Bursey’s call led to the abductor’s arrest and the successful recovery of three Miamisburg, Ohio children. Mr. Ellis saw an AMBER Alert on TV for a 15-year-old boy from Sidney, Ohio. Mr. Ellis memorized the details of the suspect and the vehicle. Later at a gas station, Ellis saw a suspect and vehicle matching the AMBER Alert description and he called police who recovered the teenager and arrested the suspect.

Two years ago, Taft charged the AMBER Plan Task Force to develop recommendations for implementing Ohio’s statewide AMBER alert system. An outgrowth of that effort was the creation of the AMBER Alert Steering Committee on January 1, 2003. Since then, Ohio has issued 25 AMBER alerts at the local, regional or statewide level – all resulting in the safe return of 30 children.

The Governor welcomed more than 400 law enforcement officials from across the nation to the annual National AMBER Alert Conference, which aims to promote the development of AMBER plans and notification systems. Taft also recognized the AMBER Alert Steering Committee for its continued hard work coordinating and administering the statewide AMBER plan with local or regional plans, developing training and procedures for activation, and increasing awareness through partnerships and education.

For more information on Ohio’s AMBER Alert plan, log onto www.ohioamberplan.org.

###

Contact: Ann Husted, Governor’s Communications Office, at 614-644-0957; or
Rob Glenn, Ohio EMA, at 614-799-3695.