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*Governor*  
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*Governor*  
Andy Wilson, *Director*

## **AMBER Alert Advisory Committee Testimony Captain Ronald E. Raines – Ohio State Highway Patrol**

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Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Hillyer, and members of the Joint Sunset Review Committee, my name is Captain Ron Raines. As the Highway Patrol's appointee to the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee, it is my honor to represent the committee for this hearing and to advocate for its continued authorization.

The committee's primary purpose is to help increase the chance of safely recovering abduction victims or other life-threatening situations when administering the AMBER Alert, Endangered Missing Child Alert, Endangered Missing Adult Alert, and the Ohio Blue Alert programs. The committee is dedicated to a statewide approach to the emergency alert programs through coordination of resources, information sharing, and training. This ensures the most timely and efficient notification for law enforcement, emergency alert partners, and the public.

The development of the Ohio AMBER Alert program, a significant milestone in our state's commitment to public safety, began in August 2002. This was a result of an Executive Order (2002-10T) issued by then-Governor Taft. The Executive Order created the AMBER Plan Task Force for the development of the AMBER Plan. Legislation enacted in January 2003 created the Ohio AMBER program and led to the appointment of the Ohio AMBER Alert Steering Committee in July 2003, which is now known as the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee. This committee, with its diverse representation, has played a pivotal role in shaping the Ohio AMBER Alert program, ensuring that it meets the needs of our state.

As directed by 5502.521, the committee consists of thirteen (13) members appointed by the governor. The appointees represent the Attorney General's Office, Ohio Emergency Management Agency, Ohio Association of Broadcasters, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, State Emergency Communications Committee, a local or regional AMBER Plan representative, a community member, Ohio Department of Aging, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and a victim's advocate.

The Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee is non-funded, and expenses related to its work are paid for by the member's existing agency or organizational budget. Likewise, the costs associated with alert activation services are incurred by the budgets of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Ohio State Highway Patrol, and the Ohio Attorney General's Office, Bureau of Criminal Investigations.

Since the inception of the Ohio alerts system in 2002, more than 2,700 victims have been safely recovered among the four alert categories.

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The AMBER Alert Advisory Committee's continued oversight of Ohio's alert programs provides sustained coordination among programs, program growth, and ongoing training resources. This ensures that information is disseminated in a timely manner and enhances the safe recovery of at-risk victims. The committee's dedication to these aspects instills confidence in the effectiveness of our alert programs.

Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Hillyer, and members of the Joint Sunset Review Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the AMBER Alert Advisory Committee. I am happy to entertain any questions at this time.