NOVEMBER 14, 2008

CCAO PRIORITIES & OTHER ISSUES FOR “LAME DUCK” SESSION

We encourage county commissioners and others to continue their ongoing discussions with state representatives and senators on a number of legislative matters, particularly as noted in the prior story, the need to enact 9-1-1 legislation, during the upcoming “lame duck” session in November and December. Following are a few highlights of initiatives that the legislature likely will consider.

9-1-1 Funding is on the Legislature’s Radar Screen

As you know, the 32-cent per month surcharge to support wireless 9-1-1 systems in Ohio expires on December 31 of this year. With the legislators back in Columbus this week, we have been hearing from all corners that something needs to be done on 9-1-1 during the “lame duck” session. Legislators have told us that commissioners and emergency service providers have been talking to them about 9-1-1 funding. Thank you, and please continue this discussion!

Please contact your legislators again and particularly emphasize the following points:

1. The 32-cent per month surcharge is the 4th lowest in the country, and only one state (Missouri) does not have a charge. The “average” charge is around 50 cents.

2. The FCC authorizes wireline companies (telcos) to (a) recover the cost of their equipment that is required to “trunk” access of a wireless call received and transmitted through their wireline to a PSAP and (b) receive a fee for each wireless 9-1-1 call routed to a PSAP. These costs that the telcos recover are significant and, in many cases, approach the total funding the county receives from the 9-1-1 monthly surcharge.

3. Additional personnel are required to manage the significant increase in the number of emergency calls the public’s access to wireless 9-1-1 services generates. It is important to retain current law, which allows funds to be used for personnel costs after the county has certified to the PUCO that all equipment and training costs have been completed.

4. Federal law (9-1-1 Modernization and Public Safety Act of 2007 - HR 3403) now specifically authorizes states to impose a fee on IP-enabled voice services (VoIP/Cable phone customers)
to fund the implementation and support of 9-1-1 services. Based upon this federal legislation, the wireless 9-1-1 surcharge should be extended to include VoIP and cable phone numbers.

5. Continuing the current funding model in Ohio for our 9-1-1 systems will ensure that people experiencing emergencies will be able to make calls to 9-1-1 from any device, from any place, at any time, and receive the response from our public safety forces they expect and deserve.

Compensation for Elected Officials

Ohio law provides annual increases through the 2008 calendar year. In order to have an adjustment in 2009 or subsequent years, the Ohio Legislature and Governor must enact legislation yet this year, and that legislation must be effective no later than January 1, 2009. Unfortunately, discussions with various legislators put this initiative in the uphill category, given the economic conditions, timing, and politics. Nonetheless, commissioners should continue to talk with their legislators and the Governor to explain the importance of doing a cost of living adjustment package in 2008 for later years.

Some individuals have floated the idea of passing a bill yet this year that freezes salaries in 2009 and provides cost of living adjustments in 2010 and thereafter. Such a bill would recognize the challenging economic conditions by providing no increase next year but would enable county officials to receive an adjustment later in their term of office, so that they are not frozen for 4 years. Grassroots communication is very much needed to pass a salary adjustment bill.

Dog Law Update

Legislation (HB 446) updating the dog and animal control laws will be brought up for sponsor testimony on Tuesday, November 17 at 10 a.m. before the Senate State and Local Government and Veterans Affairs Committee. The general purpose of HB 446 is to revise antiquated animal control laws and generally require dogs, cats and ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies. The sponsor of HB 446 is Representative Shawn Webster, a practicing veterinarian, who is respected widely for his professional knowledge of this subject matter. Because HB 446 is a complex piece of legislation with many provisions (some favorable and some unfavorable), CCAO testified as an interested party in the House. Provisions of HB 446 CCAO generally supports include an increasing the minimum dog and kennel fees, revising the cost schedule for seizing and impounding dogs, establishing minimum penalties for violating the dog laws, and creating prospective training requirements for dog wardens and deputy dog wardens. CCAO has concerns about the provisions of HB 446 that would change the title of the dog warden to chief animal control officer, and mandate using a “wand” device for detecting microchips inserted subcutaneously in dogs. Other issues that might be raised in the context of this bill include authorizing county commissioners to provide a due process provision for any community that has not established a process to hear cases involving dangerous or vicious dogs and permitting properly trained dog warden employees to use tranquilizing drugs when necessary.

County Commissioners’ Obligation Relative to Law Libraries

Legislation that various interested parties drafted, including CCAO, would change the phase-out schedule relative to county commissioners’ obligation for law library space and staff salaries, and instead establish a county agency (county law library resources board), as well as a statewide consortium of county law libraries, to help coordinate legal research and reference
material in a cost-effective manner. Senator Goodman has introduced this legislation as Senate Bill 345.

**What Else?**

Included in speculation is whether the General Assembly will further consider of House Bill 270, sponsored by Rep. Michelle Schneider. The bill, practically speaking, would prohibit elected officials from retiring from office and returning to the same elected position. As a whole, the bill would require individuals to sit out a short period of time before returning to the same or similar position, but the time length is too long for an elected official to leave and return to the same seat. The bill also makes other pension changes. It is pending in the Ohio House.

The Statehouse crowd also is speculating as to whether the clerks of courts will be able to secure an increase in their title fees or whether this issue will be debated around the transportation budget bill next spring.

Developers are pushing for a rewrite of state tax laws relative to wind turbines. As you can imagine, a “rewrite” usually equates with wanting to pay less taxes! Yet in all fairness, the tax statutes were not written with this technology in mind, and application of Ohio’s tax policy is “interesting” in how it impacts a user with a single wind turbine for their personal use versus a large operation developed to supply energy on a wide-scale. Greater clarity in the statute probably is not a bad thing. Yet, abating or lowering the rates is another issue.

People also are speculating about election administration law changes, prevailing wage changes, and other issues. In regards to prevailing wage, groups disagree over how to apply the state’s prevailing wage law to private projects that receive public funding. (Please see later story regarding Sen. John Carey’s prevailing wage legislation.) Speaker Jon Husted has been attributed as saying that he would consider legislation to roll back the Strickland Administration’s new policy on Clean Ohio projects, particularly those relating to private/public partnerships in the brownfields area, and certain other public/private initiatives.

Meanwhile, Rep. Larry Flowers has introduced a bill that would prohibit local governments from barring contractors who have had a prevailing wage complaint lodged against them. However, the bill would not affect rules that preclude contractors who have been found in violation of prevailing wage law.

His proposal was inspired by controversy over the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners’ prevailing wage rules that have sparked numerous court challenges over the new baseball stadium that currently is under construction. The legislation could be a vehicle for passing other pending prevailing wage measures before the end of the session, noted Rep. Flowers.

Finally, there is a quite a bit of concern as to whether the legislature will enact any of the reforms of the Report of the Commission on Cuyahoga County Government Reform. Included in the suggested reforms is a move towards a three member commission with a strong president, and consolidation of numerous offices to be appointed by the commissioners with only the sheriff and prosecutor remaining elected offices. CCAO has called a meeting of the CCAO General Government Committee meeting next week to discuss the report and its recommendations. CCAO policy staff will offer more insight into our response and strategy following next week’s discussion. A copy of the report is attached to this Statehouse Report.
GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP TAKING SHAPE FOLLOWING ELECTION

Following an election that saw the Ohio Democratic Party wrest control of the Ohio House of Representatives from the Republicans for the first time in fourteen years, the various caucuses began meeting this week to reorganize their respective leadership slates.

In the House, Democrat Representative Armond Budish (R-Beachwood) is considered the strong favorite to assume the Speaker’s role, although Rep. Ted Celeste also is vying for the position. State Rep. Matt Szollosi (D-Toledo) is slated to be in the number two leadership position behind Budish. Other leadership prospects include State Rep. Jennifer Garrison (D-Marietta), State Rep. Tracy Heard (D-Columbus), State Rep. Vernon Sykes (D-Akron), and State Rep. Allan Sayre (D-Dover).

Meanwhile, across the aisle, Rep. William G. Batchelder of Medina, a respected 32-year legislative veteran, was named Thursday as the new House Minority Leader by his colleagues. Rep. Lou Blessing (R-Cincinnati) will be the Assistant Minority Leader, Rep. John Adams (R-Sidney) will be Minority Whip, and Rep.-elect Kris Jordan (R-Delaware) will be Assistant Minority Whip.

Over in the Ohio Senate, the Republicans remain in control. Senate President Bill Harris is expected to remain at the helm of the caucus for the next two years before he is term limited. The leadership team has seen some upheaval due to the early retirement of Senator Jeff Jacobson and the election of Sen. Austria to Congress. While Sen. Niehaus has been elevated to the 2nd ranking leadership slot of President Pro Tempore, the caucus Majority Floor Leader and Assistant Majority Floor Leader positions remain vacant at press. Senate Republicans, who hold a 21-12 majority, will formally select their leadership team next week.

On the Democratic side, Wednesday saw Senate Democrats elect Sen. Capri Cafaro of Hubbard to lead the minority caucus in the 128th General Assembly. Sen. Cafaro, who was appointed to the chamber in 2006 and just won election to her first four-year term, will succeed Sen. Ray Miller (D-Columbus), who did not seek reelection to the post. Joining her in leadership will be Sens. Shirley Smith of Cleveland as Assistant Minority Leader, Sen. Ray Miller as Minority Whip, and Sen. Jason Wilson of Columbiana as Assistant Minority Whip.

OHIO ELECTION OFFICIALS CONSIDER EXPANDING EARLY VOTING SYSTEM

As reported in The Plain Dealer

Ohio elections officials are considering expanding early-voting opportunities (possibly for the 2010 Governor's race) after the massive turnout of early voters propelled the state to a crisis-free presidential election last week.

The success of early voting gives Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner a chance to resurrect her plan to let counties open four locations each for voters in the 35 days before an election. Ohio now allows only one early-voting center per county. Brunner would need a change in state law to implement the plan. She said she will gauge interest at a bipartisan election summit next month. "I suspect early voting is going to be a very hot topic," said Aaron Ockerman, a lobbyist for the Ohio Association of Election Officials. "I think we would fully support expanding it, especially in big counties."
The Nov. 4 election was the first presidential contest in which voters could cast absentee ballots without giving a reason for voting early. Some Ohio counties, including Cuyahoga, encouraged early voting by keeping their balloting sites open seven days a week.

In Cuyahoga, about 54,000 people, or about 8 percent of those who voted, visited the Board of Elections downtown to cast ballots early. More than 200,000 others mailed in absentee ballots, and about 395,000 people voted on Election Day. The high early turnout drastically reduced lines at the polls and allowed poll workers to close most locations on time. "Early voting was a huge advantage," said Jane Platten, the Board's director.

But, there was a price. The county paid at least $220,000 extra to staff the center on weekends. And the wait to vote early sometimes reached two hours. The long lines, which also were seen in other urban areas, discouraged some voters in large counties, said Dan Tokaji, law professor at Ohio State University and Associate Director of Election Law at the Moritz College of Law. "The most useful reform would be to expand the number of locations in larger counties," Tokaji said.

Brunner, a Democrat, tried to amend a House bill this year to allow four early voting centers per county. But, the Republican-led legislature denied her request. With a Democratic majority set to take control of the House next year, however, Brunner's ideas could get renewed support. Republicans maintained their majority in the Senate. CCAO also did not support the expansion due to additional administrative costs to counties.

House Speaker Jon Husted, a Dayton-area Republican, who is moving to the state Senate next year, said he has not decided whether he will support more centers. Husted said he still has concerns about the window in the first week of early voting when voters can register and vote on the same day. He said identification requirements in those days aren't strong enough because people can get a ballot before their registration is verified.

Ockerman, the lobbyist for the election officials' group, said he expects the legislature to approach early-voting reform cautiously. A pilot program could be installed for the statewide election in 2010. "I think the prospect for the future is pretty wide open," Ockerman said.

SENATE REPUBLICANS OFFER PREVAILING WAGE LEGISLATION

On Wednesday, Senate Republicans offered developers clear rules for when to use union-scale prevailing wages on state construction projects, clearing up confusion created by the Governor, said a state lawmaker.

The proposal by State Sen. John Carey (R., Wellston), which has the support of Senate President Bill Harris, would require developers to pay prevailing wage for an entire project if state dollars fund 35 percent or more of the project. If state dollars represent less than 35 percent of the cost (5 percent, for example), prevailing wage would be paid only on that portion of it (in this case 5 percent.) Mr. Carey described his plan as being neither pro nor anti-prevailing wage, but an attempt to give developers clear rules for following prevailing wage law.

The prevailing wage, which essentially is the rate on local union projects, varies from place to place but tends to be higher than the market rate. Ohio has had a prevailing wage law on public projects since 1931.
Republicans have assailed Democratic Gov. Ted Strickland’s guidelines issued last summer, saying they amount to an expansion in the use of prevailing wage that will depress economic development in Ohio when the state can least afford it. Mr. Strickland has said his guidelines only clarify a law that increasingly has been ignored by developers during Republican administrations since the early 1990s. “What has happened is it’s just confused the issue,” Mr. Carey said about the Governor’s guidelines. “This [the GOP plan] captures what they’re trying to do and puts it in terms that people understand.”

Mr. Carey’s bill would go against some of Mr. Strickland’s guidelines. For example, Mr. Strickland’s guidelines require prevailing wage to be paid when public money is used to clean up a polluted site, and on the subsequent development that is built on the site. Mr. Carey’s bill requires the wage to be paid on the cleanup, but not on the resulting development.

Mr. Strickland has said he’s not changing the law and that GOP fears of an economic backlash are overblown. But administration documents the Associated Press obtained through a public records request show Mr. Strickland and his advisers acknowledge that the use of prevailing wage would be expanded under his guidelines. When discussing differing interpretations of the law, expanding the use of prevailing wage was viewed as a “pro” in the meeting between the two officials, while minimizing the use of the wage was a “con.”

The law as written leaves much for interpretation, leaving economic development decisions at the whim of court rulings, sometimes after projects have been completed, said J.C. Wallace, Executive Director of the Ohio Economic Development Association. That leaves developers unsure of whether they want to do business in Ohio, he said. "There definitely was a need for clarification of this because there were a number of ambiguities for when it applied and when it didn't apply," Mr. Wallace said.

**STATE ANNOUNCES PLAN TO RECALL LOCAL RAPID RESPONSE DOLLARS**

As we’ve all witnessed, Ohio’s workers are struggling with increasing business closures and layoffs. The state and local workforce areas use federal Rapid Response dollars to help serve these dislocated workers. On November 4, ODJFS released a memo setting out its plan to deal with the growing need for fewer Rapid Response funds. Below is an excerpt from the state’s memo:

“Our state government is facing many challenges, as well. Case in point: In the second quarter of 2008, Congress enacted a rescission to Ohio’s Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds, more than half of which -- $11 million -- came out of Rapid Response funds. Because we recognize that areas’ Rapid Response needs vary, and because we value our relationship with each of the Workforce Investment Areas, we want to give you an opportunity to collaborate with us as we undertake the difficult work of protecting our Rapid Response resources. To this end, we submit the following plan of action:

1. We are asking all WIBs receiving Rapid Response dollars to provide a voluntary deobligation to supplement the state's existing Rapid Response funding by Friday, November 14, 2008. Each area should consider its needs, demand level, and timeline in determining the amount that it contributes. If the state receives enough through the voluntary deobligation, we will not proceed to steps two and three.

2. If the total amount of voluntary contributions received by the state is not sufficient, we will initiate a targeted deobligation, based upon a review of each area's expenditures, current plans,
and progress. If the state still has not received enough through the voluntary deobligation and the targeted deobligation, we will move to step three.

3. We will implement an across-the-board deobligation.

In the event that we need to execute steps two and/or three, we will offset any voluntary deobligation so that no individual area will bear the full brunt of deobligation.

We know this may not be welcome news, but we want to assure you that ODJFS is committed to protecting our Rapid Response funds, so we can continue assisting dislocated workers over the coming year. Local Workforce Investment Areas throughout the state, as well as statewide programs, will be affected by this change. Yet, we believe this adjustment will have very little impact on those we serve.

The state's current expense rate for Rapid Response awards is approximately 16 percent. Though we are making an adjustment to existing awards, more than half the funds available for services to existing workers will still be offered in the event of a plant closing. Our current records show that more than $47 million in unspent WIA Dislocated Worker funds is available to serve these individuals.

Future Rapid Response funding to the WIA areas will be based upon quarterly expenses. If an area spends its remaining Rapid Response funds, it may become eligible for additional awards if funds are still available. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis.”

**OHIO RUNNING LOW ON UNEMPLOYMENT MONEY**

With unemployment rising, state officials warn that Ohio's fund for paying jobless benefits is dwindling and could be empty by next month. As of Friday, the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund balance was $325 million, down from $594 million a year ago and far below the state's minimum safe level of $2.5 billion. The state pays out more than $100 million a month in benefits.

A recent report from the National Employment Law Project said Ohio was one of five states that could run out of unemployment money within three months. The other states are Michigan, Indiana, New York, and South Carolina. Funds of an additional 14 states are expected to be broke within a year.

When that happens, the state will be forced to take out a federal loan to keep the unemployment checks flowing for the first time in 26 years. If the loan is not repaid within two years, federal law mandates automatic tax increases on Ohio employers.

Gov. Ted Strickland says he's asking Congress for federal aid to replenish the fund so the state won't have to borrow. The move comes as the state is bracing for more job losses in the auto industry and air-express industry.

"It's bad," said Andrew E. Doehrel, President of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and co-chairman of the state's Unemployment Compensation Advisory Council. "We may have to begin to borrow as soon as December because unemployment has continued to rise and we're in worse shape than we were a few months ago." The Advisory Council, which is made up of business and labor representatives, has been unable to reach consensus on what should be done, Doehrel said. The council will present options to elected leaders that include a
Wayne Vroman of the Urban Institute, a Washington-based nonpartisan research group, recommended a combination of tax increases to businesses that contribute to the fund, and benefit reductions for those who lose their jobs. Specifically, he proposed:

- Freezing the amount of benefits paid for three years, beginning in 2009.
- Expanding the wage base on which employers pay taxes by as much as $3,000. (Employers currently are taxed on the first $9,000 earned by each employee.)
- Eliminating dependents’ benefits.
- Linking the taxable wage base to earnings so it goes up as wages increase.

Strickland spokesman Keith Dailey said the Governor is eager to review the options so a solution can be crafted. Dailey could not say whether the Governor will push for a resolution when lawmakers return to Columbus for a short lame-duck session later this year, or wait until next year.

**OHIO TAX RECEIPTS CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE**

A month after the state revised its monthly revenue estimates lower, total tax receipts for October still were down by $96 million as the national economy continues to deteriorate, the state’s budget director announced Monday.

The majority of that drop came from a decline in personal income taxes and non-auto sales taxes, which are the state’s two largest sources. “These two revenue sources are the two best ‘real-time’ indicators of the health of Ohio’s economy, and this performance is of concern,” Budget Director J. Pari Sabety said in her monthly financial report.

Ohio continues to lose jobs, and the state’s unemployment rate reached 6.5 percent in October, the highest it has been since early 1994.

Gov. Ted Strickland, who already has cut spending and made other budget adjustments totaling $1.3 billion this year, said Monday that he’s monitoring the situation closely. Strickland said he hopes more cuts won’t be needed but made it clear he will do what’s needed to maintain a balanced budget. When asked whether that could include a tax increase, the Governor replied, "A tax hike under these circumstances would be, in my judgment, counterproductive."

**STOCK DECLINES WRECK HAVOC ON RETIREMENT SYSTEMS; MORE BAD NEWS TO COME**

Ohio’s public employee retirement system ledgers took significant hits in the first half of 2008, a period that saw the top-performing system lose nearly 6% of its value. And that’s before investment markets really started heading south.

Evaluation Associates said Ohio’s systems were victims of a general downturn in the nation’s economy, as were public employee retirement systems in other states. The company’s Paul Morgan stressed the importance of viewing the returns over a longer period of time, but didn’t downplay the significance of the market downturn. “There was no
place to hide if you had equity exposure," he said, adding that the first half of the year served as a "precursor to the current global financial crisis."

Mr. Morgan told the Ohio Retirement Study Council that the Wilshire 5000, a benchmark public investment index, had fallen by 33% from Jan. 1 to Oct. 30, a decline that he warned will appear in future performance reports. He said the declines are similar to what investors saw in 2001-2003.

Leading the way among pension funds for the six-month period was Ohio Police & Fire, which saw its returns fall by 5.91%. It was followed by School Employees Retirement System, which declined by 6.6%; Highway Patrol Retirement System, which fell 6.77%; Public Employees Retirement System, which dropped 6.92%; and State Teachers Retirement System, which fell by 7.28%. The segregated OPERS health care fund was the overall top performer for the period, losing 4.69% of value.

For the first half of the year, all defined benefit plans performed below the median among the university of public retirement funds, something that Mr. Morgan said is driven by Ohio systems' heavier reliance on equity investments. Ohio systems tend to lead the pack when stock markets advance, he said. Mr. Morgan said, however, there is reason to take comfort in the systems' longer-term returns, noting that each system has posted "strong" results and outperformed their benchmarks.

Over three years, the top gainer was STRS, which has added 9.09% per year. It was followed by OP&F, which added 8.96% annually; SERS, which added 8.54% per year; PERS, which added 7.97% a year; and HPRS, which advanced 7.15% per year. The OPERS health care fund has averaged annual gains of 7.06% over three years.

Evaluation Associates noted that the first half of 2008 was a difficult time for all investors, with domestic and international stocks each declining by nearly 11%. Real estate (+2.17%), cash (+1.20%) and U.S. fixed income (+1.13%) were the leading sectors.

Mr. Morgan also noted that the report caps a ten-year history of the systems' "prudent person" investment policies. He said future reviews will gauge those results with an eye toward system portfolio structure and active versus passive management strategies.

Council members questioned a note in the investment report that HPRS is more heavily involved in alternatives, which include investments in hedge funds and other instruments. HPRS Director Richard Curtis said the system has about a 19% stake in alternatives, compared to its 15% target, but noted that the overage is due to the fact that alternatives have performed better than equities in the short term. He noted that the value of the system's alternatives have fallen by 4.9% over nine months, compared to a 21.5% decline in a comparable stock index. Mr. Morgan said the higher alternative investment position more closely resembles foundation investment strategies, but said he encourages public funds to use alternatives and hedge funds.

REMINDER: HB 9 PUBLIC RECORDS TRAINING

As you may recall, House Bill 9 requires all elected officials or their designees to receive three hours of education on public records law for each term served in office. Both the Attorney General’s office and the Auditor of State’s office are able to provide this training.
For the Attorney General’s office, please call the AG’s Help Center at 1-877-AG-4-OHIO or 614-644-5224. You can also find information at the following website: http://www.ag.state.oh.us/publicrecords/training.asp.

For the Auditor of State’s Open Government Unit, please call 1-(800) 282-0370 or (614) 466-4890 and ask for Teresa Goodridge, Paralegal for the Open Government Unit. Related information can be found at http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/OGU/Default.htm.

NEW BILLS:

SB 372 ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITS (Niehaus) To extend from January 1, 2009 to January 1, 2014, the time by which environmental audits must be completed in order to be within the scope of certain privileges and immunities that apply to such audits, and to declare an emergency. Am. 3745.71 & 3745.72.

SB 373 VACANT HOMES (Kearney) To authorize local governments to exempt homes that have been vacant for at least nine months from property taxation for up to three years when purchased by an owner-occupant. En. 5709.89

SB 374 FORECLOSED PROPERTIES (Kearney) To prohibit requiring a tenant to vacate a foreclosed residential property any earlier than 90 days following a court’s confirmation of the sale of the property. En. 5321.20

SB 375 FRAUD REPORTING (Wagoner) To require the Auditor of State to establish a fraud-reporting system for residents and public employees to file anonymous complaints of fraud and misuse of public funds by public offices. Am. 124.341

HB 632 LAKE ERIE WIND (McGregor, J.) To require the Director of Natural Resources to establish a plan to make available for lease areas of the bed of Lake Erie for the purpose of wind energy development and to require Lake Erie wind farms to be certified by the Power Siting Board. Am. & En. 303.213, 519.213, 713.081, 1506.11, 4906.13, 4906.20, 4906.98, 5751.01, 5751.20, 1506.111, 1506.112, and 4906.21

HB 633 COMMUNITY COURTS (Wolpert) To authorize townships that meet specified criteria to adopt criminal codes and create community courts. Am. & En. 109.42, 109.572, 109.60, 120.03, 120.14, 120.15, 120.16, 120.18, 120.24, 120.25, etc.

HB 634 FRAUD REPORTING (McGregor, R.) To require the Auditor of State to establish a fraud-reporting system for residents and public employees to file anonymous complaints of fraud and misuse of public funds by public offices. Am. & En. 124.341 and 117.103

HB 635 ANIMAL FARMS (Gibbs) To revise the Concentrated Animal Feeding Facilities Law. Am. 903.01, 903.02, 903.03, 903.04, 903.05, 903.06, 903.07, 903.08, 903.09, 903.10, 903.15, 903.16, 903.17, and 6111.03

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, November 18

Senate Highways & Transportation, (Chr. Buehrer, 466-8150), North Hearing Rm., 9:30 am

HB 318 ROAD STATUS (Gibbs) To make changes relative to the provisions that govern the placing of county and township roads on nonmaintained status. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments/substitute

SB 317 DRIVING PRIVILEGES (Padgett) To allow a court, under certain circumstances, to grant unaccompanied driving privileges one time to a probationary driver's license holder who, because of a moving violation, otherwise would be subject to a restriction that the person be accompanied by the holder’s parent or guardian. --1st Hearing-All testimony

Senate State & Local Government & Veterans Affairs, (Chr. Cates, 466-8072), South Hearing Rm., 10:00 am

HB 327 HEALTH BOARDS (McGregor, J.) With regard to boards of health of city and general health districts. --3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments
HB 266  VETERAN BOARDS (Huffman)  To enable more flexible composition of veterans memorial boards of trustees.  --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 286  INITIATIVE PETITIONS (Sykes)  To permit the committee named in an initiative petition to file, at the time the petition is filed, a statement identifying the petitioner's intent in proposing the initiated statute or constitutional amendment and to permit the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review to recommend that a proposed rule be invalided if the proposed rule conflicts with the petitioners' intent on which the rule is based.  --2nd Hearing-All testimony

HB 446  ANIMAL CONTROL (Webster)  To revise the statutes governing animal control.  --1st Hearing-Sponsor

House Session, (Chr. Husted, 466-3357), House Chamber, Webcast, Calendar, 11:00 am
Senate Session, (Chr. Harris, 466-4900), Senate Chamber, Webcast, 1:30 pm

Wednesday, November 19

House Local & Municipal Government & Urban Revitalization, (Chr. Wolpert, 466-9690), Rm. 018, 8:30 am
HB 606  COMMUNITY AUTHORITIES (Peterson)  To modify the governance and authority of new community authorities.  --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 604  INTERNET AUCTIONS (DeGeeter)  To reduce, from fifteen to ten, the minimum number of days for bidding when a nonchartered municipal corporation sells personal property by Internet auction.  --1st Hearing-Sponsor

Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (Chr. Amstutz, 466-7505), South Hearing Rm., 9:00 am
HB 458  LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDS (Uecker)  To authorize the taxing authority of a subdivision to use money derived from the general levy for current expenses for road and bridge construction and repair, and to make clarifying changes to the laws authorizing a township to provide health care insurance.  --2nd Hearing-All testimony

Senate Judiciary-Criminal Justice, (Chr. Grendell, 644-7718), North Hearing Rm., 10:00 am
HB 130  CORRECTIONS LAWS (White, Yates)  To modify sentencing procedures with respect to post-release control and related releases from prison, to conform the Revised Code to the decision of the Ohio Supreme Court in State ex rel. Bray v. Russell (2000), 89 Ohio St.3d 132 by removing provisions related to bad time, to authorize courts to participate in the supervision of released prisoners, to provide released prisoners with identification cards and additional procedures for access to social services, to make other changes relative to opportunities for prisoner training and employment, to modify procedures for the judicial or medical release of prisoners and intervention in lieu of conviction, to grant the Adult Parole Authority more flexibility in determining periods of post-release control, to adopt other cost-control measures, to create the Ex-offender Reentry Coalition, to modify the grounds for disciplinary action by occupational licensing boards against licensees charged with criminal offenses, to provide for the indemnification of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction for legal costs incurred in certain cases, to provide for legal representation of Department employees charged with offenses in certain cases until a grand jury has acted, to create a fund for the deposit of money received in certain federal law enforcement cases, to authorize the Department to enter into contracts to provide water and sewage treatment services, to make other changes related to the operations of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, to clarify the duties of juvenile parole officers, to establish reimbursement rates paid by the Department of Youth Services for outside medical providers, to authorize the Director of Youth Services to designate a deputy director, to modify the formula for expending appropriations for the care and custody of felony delinquents and the purposes for which money in the Felony Delinquent Care and Custody Fund may be used, to allow for unlimited reappointments of members of the Release Authority, and to make other changes related to the operations of the Department of Youth Services.  --2nd Hearing-All testimony

House Session, (Chr. Husted, 466-3357), House Chamber, Webcast, Calendar, 1:30 pm
**Senate Session.** (Chr. Harris, 466-4900), Senate Chamber, Webcast, 1:30 pm

**House Ways & Means.** (Chr. Gibbs, 466-2994), Rm. 121, 2:30 pm

HB 599 SATELLITE VIDEO SERVICES (Blessing) To exempt sales of satellite broadcasting services from sales and use taxation and to provide that the provisions of this act in section 5739.035 of the Revised Code terminate on January 1, 2010, when that section is repealed on that date. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 306 HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION (Schuler) To change the definition of "housing cooperative" for the purposes of the county homestead tax exemptions and property tax payment link deposit programs for low-to-moderate income senior citizens and permanently disabled citizens and to expand the definition of a homestead to include settlors of irrevocable inter vivos trusts. --1st Hearing-Sponsor & proponent

**Senate Health, Human Services & Aging.** (Chr. Coughlin, 466-4823), South Hearing Rm., 2:30 pm or after session

HB 529 ANATOMICAL GIFT ACT (Wachtmann) To adopt the Revised Uniform Anatomical Gift Act. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 493 PATHOLOGY SERVICES (Daniels) Regarding billing for anatomic pathology services. --1st Hearing-Sponsor & proponent

**House Infrastructure, Homeland Security & Veterans Affairs.** (Chr. Reinhard, 644-6265), Rm. 114, 2:30 pm

SB 129 VEHICLE REMOVAL (Schuler) To permit local law enforcement agencies and fire departments to remove motor vehicles from the roadway after a motor vehicle accident and to provide immunity to local law enforcement agencies and fire personnel for the removal of damaged or inoperable vehicles from roadways. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 248 MILITARY ISSUES (Austria) To exempt certain armed forces discharges from inspection or copying as a public record, to prohibit failing to report the unauthorized use of certain electronic property to law enforcement authorities, to create restrictions for check-cashing businesses when making a loan to certain members of the military, to excuse certain military persons from jury duty, to establish a criminal penalty for unlawfully using a deceased military person's persona, to establish tuition benefits for certain military persons and to create the Ohio Military Medal of Distinction and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program Study Committee. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

**House Civil & Commercial Law.** (Chr. Oelslager, 466-9047), Rm. 122, 2:30 pm

SB 277 NUISANCE PROPERTIES (Stivers) To create a new cause of action in foreclosure in the environmental or housing division of a municipal court to abate nuisance properties. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 380 WORKER RECORDS (Coley) To require a commercial or public entity to maintain records regarding each worker who performs services for that entity and to establish penalties for failure to maintain those records. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

**Thursday, November 20**

**House State Government & Elections.** (Chr. Daniels, 466-3506), Rm. 122, 9:30 am

HB 471 CORONERS (Setzer) To change certain powers and duties of coroners, to specify that certain records of a decedent relating to the criminal investigation of the decedent's death are not public records, and to provide supplemental compensation to full-time coroners in counties with a population exceeding 175,000 who supervise and coordinate the additional workload involved in performing autopsies under contract for at least ten other counties. --4th Hearing-All testimony

**Senate Session.** (Chr. Harris, 466-4900), Senate Chamber, Webcast, 11:00 am

**House Session.** (Chr. Husted, 466-3357), House Chamber, Webcast, Calendar, 1:00 pm
Report of the Commission on Cuyahoga County Government Reform

When a government no longer serves the best interests of the people, then the people must change that government. Change usually comes through the election of new office holders, but sometimes that is not enough change. This is such a time.

This year we observe the 200th anniversary of Cuyahoga County, and our community must confront the fact that the structure of County government no longer serves us well. From any perspective – efficiency, fairness, accountability, effectiveness – the structure of Cuyahoga County government is letting us down despite the fact that most of its employees strive to provide exemplary service.

We were appointed to the Commission on Cuyahoga County Government Reform by Governor Ted Strickland, Speaker of the House Jon Husted, and Senate President Bill Harris to recommend structural changes to Cuyahoga County’s government. Our Commission held nine public hearings over three months. We received oral and written testimony from citizens, interested organizations, elected officials and experts in the field of government structure. We interviewed all County elected administrative officials. We examined all previous studies of county reform, which gave us a valuable baseline for our work. We commissioned the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University to survey and evaluate county structures around the country. We created a web site (www.ccgovreform.org) to post updates on our work and to receive additional input. All of this helped to shape our conclusions.

As required, we have communicated our recommendations to the State to be put into legislative form for the consideration of the Ohio House and Senate. If, as we hope, the General Assembly amends the Ohio Revised Code to add our recommendations as an alternative form of statutory county government, the citizens of Cuyahoga County will have the final word on the form of government they prefer. Therefore, as citizens of this county who share a deep concern for the well-being of our community and our neighbors, we feel compelled to publicly explain our views and our recommendations.

Two Routes to County Reform – Statute and Charter

As background, it is important to distinguish between statutory and charter governments under Ohio law. Cuyahoga County operates under a statutory structure and if it retains or modifies that structure, it will remain a creature of the State. Commissioners will be implementing State law. In contrast, if the citizens of Cuyahoga County were to initiate (by petition of 10% of the voters in the last Gubernatorial election) and then enact a County Charter, the County would be more independent, similar to charter cities in Ohio. The County would have the power to exercise governmental powers so long as they did not conflict with State law.
Our Commission explored the differences between statutory and charter government. We recognized, however, that our charge from the State of Ohio was to recommend statutory reforms. We also recognized that while past studies had urged a charter form of government, those proposals all failed. We were determined to succeed this time because the need for reform is so great. Thus, we approached our task in a spirit of practicality and with respect for differences of viewpoint. We encouraged enough compromise to achieve broad consensus. We aimed for a reform package that would deliver dramatic improvement but still be relatively easy to understand and explain. Even among those who supported this recommendation, there were preferences unmet and desires not incorporated. Two members found much to commend the final plan but not enough to support it. Our analysis and deliberations taught us that there is no structure for county government universally regarded as perfect, but we were unanimous in our conclusion that the current structure is so flawed that it should be reformed.

We urge the State of Ohio to approve our recommendations for streamlining Cuyahoga County government in the manner described below so that the voters can debate them and render the ultimate judgment.

**The Structure of Cuyahoga County Government Undermines Our Community**

**Lack of transparency**

Very few people understand County government. That is not surprising; County government is nearly opaque because its structure is so complicated. Its workings are veiled by 200 years of patchwork modifications that are ill-suited for the needs of the 21st century. This sheer complexity is a major motive behind our recommendations; County government should be streamlined so that citizens can better understand it and hold it accountable. But when you penetrate the thicket of the county’s structure, as we have, many other failings become apparent.

**Lack of budgetary and administrative control**

The County has substantial authority but it is spread across 11 separately elected offices. Eight elected administrative officials operate with virtual autonomy. In practice, they each run their own hiring operations and effectively set their own budgets. Three County Commissioners have far less budget and administrative control than good governance demands. The commissioners are unable to establish countywide priorities and performance standards, and they lack enough centralized authority to offer an effective voice on major issues. At a time when our community needs every public and private organization to maximize its effectiveness to help rebuild our economy, our County government is far less capable than we need it to be.

The needs in our county are great. County government must be nimble and effective. The County’s leaders must have true ability to assess challenges, establish
program priorities and then allocate dollars to reflect those priorities. That is the only way the County government can truly address the need we all see.

Lack of a clearly identifiable leader

Any city seeking to share services with the County or any business seeking to locate here must try to strike an agreement with three County Commissioners who have equal authority. The cumbersome nature of this arrangement deters such collaborative efforts. The Commissioners annually elects a President but the role is primarily ceremonial and does not significantly contribute to creating a focal point of leadership that works to the advantage of more agile and successful governments.

Waste of taxpayer dollars

The diffusion of power also means duplication of effort, inefficiency and waste of taxpayer dollars. Nearly all of the elected administrative officers have staff who separately perform basic functions such as human resources, public outreach, information technology and financial management. As one county office holder candidly admitted, hiring by the elected officials is a “free for all” because that is what the County’s structure allows. Another elected official estimated that tens of millions of dollars could be saved each year with significant structural reform. Many of the people of Cuyahoga County are desperately struggling with the transition from an old economy to a newer and more competitive one, and we cannot afford – and the taxpayers should not be asked to pay for – waste and inefficiency.

Recommendations to Streamline County Government

We recommend the continued election of a three-member Board of County Commissioners, elected at the same general election rather than in staggered terms. One of the three positions would be President of the Board with enhanced leadership authority. Candidates would run at large for one of the three positions.

The President would have legally designated authority to:

- Recommend the annual County budget
- Recommend appointment of the County Administrator and department directors
- Act as the County’s point of executive contact on transactions with external parties
- Recommend major transactions and
- Oversee and direct the County Administrator, who acts as chief operating officer
The Board of County Commissioners as a whole would have authority to:

- Approve the budget
- Approve appointments
- Approve major transactions and other decisions required by law

We recommend the continued election of the County Prosecutor and the County Sheriff. We recommend that the Civil Division on the Prosecutor’s Office be transferred to the Board of County Commissioners and become the Department of Law, with a Law Director appointed by the Commissioners.

We recommend that the County Auditor, Recorder and Treasurer become part of a Department of Finance along with the Title Division of the Clerk of Courts and the Office of Budget and Management. The Finance Director should be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. We further recommend that an Office of Internal Audit be created by statute within this Department of Finance. The Department should be organized into appropriate divisions separating functions to preserve checks and balances.

We recommend that the Clerk of Courts become a position appointed by the Court of Common Pleas, except the Title Division, which would be transferred to the Department of Finance.

We recommend that the County Coroner become the Medical Examiner, licensed as a forensic pathologist, appointed by the Board of County Commissioners.

We recommend that the County Engineer become a position appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, with specified professional qualifications.

These recommended changes can be visualized by comparing the current and proposed organizational charts:
Current Structure

Voters of Cuyahoga County

- Auditor
- Clerk of Courts
- Board of County Commissioners
- Coroner
- Engineer
- Prosecutor
- Recorder
- Sheriff
- Treasurer
- County Administrator

Proposed Structure*

Voters of Cuyahoga County

- Commissioner
- Commissioner
- BOCC President
- Prosecutor
- Sheriff
- County Administrator

- Department of Finance
- Medical Examiner
- Engineer
- Law Department

*This organizational chart illustrates primarily the proposed arrangement of offices that currently are headed by elected officials. Many other County departments are not depicted.
To enhance a close connection with residents, we further recommend making the County Ombudsman a statutorily mandated position. The Ombudsman would help residents find their way through the system of County services and it would help to ensure that County offices are meeting the needs of the public.

We recommend including a statutory obligation for a Human Resource Commission to set appropriate standards and requirements for County employment, especially for department head positions. The Commission should be made up of three members recommended by the President and appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. The members must be individuals who are experienced in personnel matters and committed to equal employment opportunity.

We further recommend that the State of Ohio create a panel to review and recommend changes to the array of Boards and Commissioners to which the County makes appointments. These Boards and Commissions comprise an influential but largely invisible part of local government. They need to be better coordinated with County functions – for reasons of efficiency, effectiveness and clarity.

Streamlining Saves Millions, HelpsAdvance Our Economy and Promotes Fairness

Enhanced effectiveness and efficiency

Streamlining Cuyahoga County government would make it far more efficient by eliminating unnecessary elective offices and by giving leadership authority to the President of the Board of County Commissioners. The duplication and waste that occurs in the current diffused structure would be dramatically reduced. Millions of dollars could be saved each year. Consequently, we feel strongly that it will be a major improvement to transform six elected offices – with a total of more than 1,000 employees and budgets exceeding $110 million – into appointed positions. We did not recommend converting the Prosecutor and Sheriff to appointed positions despite the potential for efficiency gains because their roles are essential to the administration of justice. On balance, we agreed that these officials merited independence from a central elected appointing authority and would better serve the people by being directly elected.

E lecting a top leader every four years

Streamlining County government as we recommend would make it far more effective because it would create focused leadership capacity and a “go to” President on major actions requiring the County’s participation. It would centralize meaningful control over the budget and administration and it would allow the County to set priorities and stick to them. This is particularly important since our community needs the County to be a more effective leader on regional issues, especially economic issues. A Board of County Commissioners led by a “strong President” would be a nimble and effective actor in this arena that demands collaboration across political boundaries.
Improving public confidence and fairness

A lean and efficient government would encourage confidence in the County. But confidence in government is a product of many factors, including the breadth of its representation. Ours is a diverse community and County government at all levels should reflect the people it represents. Recently minorities have been more successful in countywide elections than ever before and we are heartened by this trend. Considerations of fairness and how a change in County structure would affect the opportunities of minorities to win elected office were the subject of much deliberation by our Commission. The outcome of recent elections played a key role in persuading us that countywide elections should be retained – with resulting benefits for regional problem solving – without resorting to a structure that divides Cuyahoga County into districts. Concern was expressed that one new minority office holder would be the last elected County Recorder under these recommendations. But in the final analysis, the benefits to all County citizens, especially disadvantaged citizens who will be among the primary beneficiaries of a more efficient and effective County structure, outweighed the value of retaining an elected office that would be more suitably filled by appointment.

Accountable and transparent leadership

The proposed “strong President” form of County government would be far more accountable to the public because it would be clear who initiates and who approves County actions. Citizens would be able to understand their government to a far greater degree because there would be fewer elected offices and because of the more logical organization of functions. Electing all three Commissioners at the same time would enhance accountability by giving the voters the opportunity to fairly assess both the Board of County Commissioners as a body and its individual members.

The powers vested in the President are sufficient to create a focal point of leadership for County government but yet are limited so that the other two Commissioners play meaningful roles in County governance. The President is designated as the leader with whom external and internal parties would primarily interact in order to shape proposals and policies. This improvement over the current structure allows the County to more quickly and efficiently arrive at plans for action. This will save time and money for the County and for external parties such as a business seeking to locate here. Yet, it is important to note that the President cannot, under this approach, strike a deal unilaterally. The Board of County Commissioners as a whole retains the final authority to take action.

The Question of Three Commissioners v. One Executive and a Council

We evaluated numerous alternative structures, especially the option of electing a single County Executive and a County Council. Some of our members felt that the “strong President” form would be more effective and efficient than an Executive and Council. Others felt it would better preserve minority opportunity for significant political
office. Still others supported the final recommendation as a compromise, recognizing that unanimity around any particular option is nearly impossible. We concluded that our recommendation contains an effective leadership arrangement combined with sufficient checks and balances in a County that is acting as an extension of the State, without home rule legislative powers. However, the absence of the traditional separation of executive and legislative powers was enough to cause dissent from our Commission’s final recommendations. For most of our members, two factors were decisive on the separation of powers issue: (1) Designating a President with specified powers creates far more separation of powers than is currently in place and it enables voters to determine who proposes and who approves, and (2) Counties are extensions of State government without real legislative authority, and since the State operates under clear separation of powers, the principle is far less important in County government. Indeed, Ohio counties have operated for two centuries without it. For these reasons, we believe that this statutory structure strikes an innovative and effective balance among the many competing values and objectives that we considered.

If Cuyahoga County were to operate under a charter, many of our Commission’s members would weigh some considerations differently because a charter would confer legislative powers on the County. In such a case, the separation of powers doctrine would persuade a majority of our members to urge the creation of a County Council and a County Executive. But our Commission’s charge from the State was to recommend statutory changes and we have done so. Nevertheless, the clear majority of the Commission’s members believe that a charter would ultimately be desirable because it would give our community greater local control and flexibility. Although the statutory reforms we are recommending would be a dramatic advance, we hope that a charter will be pursued at some point by an organized group of citizens.

The Path We Have Traveled and the Road Ahead

We learned much more about Cuyahoga County government than we could translate into reform recommendations because our mandate was to address the structure of the government rather than its management, priorities or budgeting. For instance, we noted the relative under-funding of the Public Defender compared to the County Prosecutor and we feel strongly that this disparity deserves greater attention by the County. We recognized the need for adequate funding for public accountability mechanisms we have recommended such as the Ombudsman and Office of Internal Audit. We are concerned about the expansive power of the courts to order the County to meet whatever they deem to be their budget needs. Even though these and other concerns surfaced in our deliberations, our recommendations necessarily address structure. Nevertheless, these concerns contribute to the urgency of the need for change. The current structure is so diffused and illogical that budget decisions in the best interests of the people are constantly eroded. That same overly complicated structure makes it impossible for the county’s citizens to even see that this is happening. We now turn to the State of Ohio to help us solve these problems.
The State’s leadership asked us to recommend reforms that could be put into the Ohio Revised Code as an option for the voters of Cuyahoga County to consider. We have met that charge. We ask the Ohio Legislature and the Governor to expeditiously adopt these recommendations so that our community can fully debate their merits. The many civic and economic challenges we face are well known. These reforms will help Cuyahoga County compete in a global economy. They will save taxpayer dollars. They will allow strong leaders to chart a clear course and then act. They dramatically improve accountability. They will strengthen a countywide, long-term perspective. They will protect fair representation and improve access for the public. They have a strong chance of approval by the voters.

Further improvements will always be needed. But we must start now. We hope all voters will enthusiastically support these reforms so that our community can set a fresh course toward a bright future. But first, the State must provide that opportunity and we strongly urge prompt action.

The Commission on Cuyahoga County Government Reform

David Abbott, chair
Former Congressman Louis Stokes, vice chair
Mayor Bruce Akers
Kathleen Barber
Mayor Jerry Hruby
Former State Representative Sally Conway Kilbane
Stanley Miller
Former Mayor Judy Rawson
Ernest Wilkerson

November 2008
Acknowledgements

The Commission was created by the State of Ohio in July 2008 and held its first meeting on July 25. Fulfilling the charge to make recommendations by November 7 would have been impossible without the contributions of many organizations and individuals and we express our appreciation to them for their efforts. These included all of those who have analyzed County government over many years and have previously recommended reforms. Among them, the work of several was especially helpful: The Citizens Committee for County Government Reform, the Greater Cleveland Bar Association, the League of Women Voters and Eugene Kramer.

Many people took the time to share their insights as formal testimony at one of our public hearings. Their views shaped our conclusions: Cuyahoga County Commissioners Timothy Hagan and Peter Lawson Jones, County Administrator James McCafferty, Director Alexandra Turk of the Office of Budget and Management, Janice Patterson and Lynda Mayer of the League of Women Voters, Joseph Roman, president of the Greater Cleveland Partnership; former County Administrators Jeri Chaikin, David Reines and Danny Williams; Steven Kaufman, former president of the Greater Cleveland Bar Association; Robert Jaquay, former executive director of the Citizens Committee for County Government Reform; County Ombudsman Charissa Prunty; Robyn Minter Smyers; Eric Johnson; the County Auditors Association of Ohio; the County Engineers Association of Ohio; the County Recorders Association of Ohio, and the County Treasurers Association of Ohio.

We are grateful to all of the Cuyahoga County elected administrative officials who willingly were interviewed by committees of the Commission and generously shared their experiences and outlooks: Clerk of Courts Gerald Fuerst, Recorder Lillian Greene, Engineer Robert Klaiber, Prosecutor William Mason, Sheriff Gerald McFaul, Coroner Frank Miller, Treasurer Jim Rokakis, and Auditor Frank Russo.

James Corrigan, Government Relations Officer for Cuyahoga County, was a continuously helpful resource. We also were assisted willingly by the County Planning Commission, the National Association of Counties, and Chris Thompson of the Fund for Our Economic Future.

Quite a few citizens attended our meetings and some of them asked probing questions or shared their opinions. We appreciate their interest and their views. We wish that even more people would demonstrate the same sort of civic commitment.

Finally, Evelyn Burnett served as project manager of this concentrated assignment and she provided consistently effective leadership and service under challenging circumstances. Our recommendations would not have been achieved without her tireless effort.