



**Ohio Association of
Community Action Agencies**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OACAA commends Sen. Rob Portman's work to strengthen our communities

COLUMBUS -The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies (OACAA) supports U.S Sen. Rob Portman for his efforts to strengthen our communities through his introduction of new legislation to begin the 114th Congress. The proposals will strengthen law enforcement's ability to protect victims of human trafficking and protect children from unregulated substances.

"These bills are important steps to improving the lives of many throughout our communities," said Philip E. Cole, executive director of OACAA. "Combatting human trafficking and illegal drugs is important because these merchants of evil destroy lives and our economy. We must all stand together in our support of his efforts."

Drugs and sex trafficking are the two largest criminal industries in the world. The proposed legislation will create stricter penalties for individuals--especially buyers-- who commit sex trafficking crimes to reduce "demand". Regulation of currently unregulated synthetic substances will reduce children's access to dangerous drugs and take an important step to preventing the attraction of drugs to young eyes.

"To combat poverty, we must combat the biggest evils of human trafficking and abuse of drugs. We cannot continue with a strong society unless we overcome these crimes," said Cole. "We commend Senator Portman and his efforts to strengthen our communities with strong, bipartisan legislation."

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Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other. Community Action Agencies work to alleviate poverty and empower low-income families in their communities. The Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies represents 50 agencies around the state serving the needs of low-income people in all of Ohio's 88 counties. CAAs provide education and training, emergency services, and other assistance programs to over 800,000 Ohioans annually.