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***Press Release***  
***August 20, 2001***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**ETHICS CHARGES FILED AGAINST PREBLE COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH  
AND RECOVERY BOARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Preble County grand jury returned an indictment Thursday, August 16, 2001, charging Preble County Mental Health and Recovery Board Executive Director, Carolyn Orr-Szoke, with having an unlawful interest in a public contract, acting on a matter in which she had a conflict of interest, and with falsification. The unlawful interest in a public contract count is a fourth-degree felony, and the other two counts are first-degree misdemeanors.

The charges resulted from an investigation by the Ohio Ethics Commission and Special Prosecutor Andrew Berghausen. Berghausen, who is an Assistant Hamilton County Prosecutor, was appointed as Special Prosecutor to prevent any potential conflict of interest by the Preble County Prosecutor's Office.

The indictment alleges that between April 1, 1998 and April 1, 1999, Orr-Szoke authorized or used her authority to secure a series of four contracts between the Preble County Mental Health and Recovery Board and Duvall & Associates, Inc., in which her daughter had an interest. It also alleges that Orr-Szoke communicated false information to the Ohio Ethics Commission. The case is scheduled for arraignment on September 13, 2001, in Preble County Common Pleas Court.

The Ohio Ethics Commission is an independent agency of state government, charged with interpreting and administering the Ohio Ethics Law. The Ethics Commission investigates alleged unethical conduct and refers violations to the appropriate prosecuting attorney for criminal prosecution. The Ethics Commission has been serving the public, and state and local governments,

