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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FORMER COUNTY TREASURER PLEADS GUILTY TO ETHICS CHARGE

Butler County Treasurer Carole B. Moschetti entered a guilty plea on May 17, 2007, to a Bill of Information filed by Special Prosecutor Lynn Grimshaw in Butler County Common Pleas Court, alleging a conflict of interest in hiring her family member. As a result of an Ethics Commission investigation, Moschetti admitted that she unlawfully used her authority as Treasurer to hire her granddaughter, Heather Maus, as a part-time employee at the Butler County Treasurer's Office from December 21, 2004, and continuing until June 7, 2007, and paying her \$3,800.

Judge Matthew Crehan sentenced Moschetti to pay the maximum fine of \$1000 and also court costs. As part of the plea agreement with the Special Prosecutor, Moschetti also agreed to resign from office effective May 31, 2007. She had previously made full restitution to the County of \$4,166.76, which was the total amount that the County paid Maus. (Maus worked at the County Records Center just prior to being hired by Moschetti.) Maus resigned from the Treasurer's Office on June 7, 2006.

Butler County Prosecutor Robin Piper requested on June 19, 2007 that the Commission investigate whether Moschetti violated the ethics law by hiring her granddaughter as a part-time employee, based upon information received by his office from the County Auditor. On October 27, 2006, Piper requested that the Butler County Common Pleas Court appoint Lynn Grimshaw as a Special Prosecutor and Paul M. Nick, the Commission's Chief Investigative Attorney, as an Assistant Special Prosecutor, to prosecute any felony or misdemeanor charges based upon the Commission's investigation. The charges filed today are the result of negotiations between the Special Prosecutor and Moschetti's counsel, Jack

Garretson.

"I think it's a fair resolution," Nick said. "She accepted responsibility in criminal court for violating the public trust by using her public position to benefit a family member. In addition, Mosketti is returning to the County and taxpayers the money unlawfully paid to her granddaughter because of her act of nepotism." Nick noted that in 1990, Mosketti received guidance from the Ethics Commission that public officials and employees could not hire family members, including grandchildren.

The ethics conflict of interest charge is first degree misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum penalty of up to a \$1,000 fine and/or six months in jail. The Ethics Law protects the public from improper conflicts of interest by prohibiting public officials and employees from misusing their public positions or participating in actions to benefit family members, themselves, or their private business.

The Ohio Ethics Commission is an independent state agency that applies and administers the Ethics Law for state and local public officials and employees outside of the General Assembly and judiciary. The Commission was created 30 years ago upon the enactment of the Ohio Ethics Law in 1973.