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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **ETHICS TRAINING WELL-RECEIVED**

**"Government agencies should require all employees attend this class."**

**"Even one day later, several of us are still commenting about how impressed we were that the Ohio government would assist us...in this way."**

**"I will recommend this to all department and division heads."**

Remarks and responses like those provided above might be typical of what you would expect for some types of trainings. But would you be surprised to learn that these are common reactions from public servants attending trainings on ethics?

At the Ohio Ethics Commission's meeting in February, the Commission received a summary of its 1998 public information and education efforts. The Commission's Education Coordinator, Melissa Falter, reported on the positive response that the Commission continues to receive regarding its ethics training efforts. Ms. Falter also advised the Commission that it had met its 1998 goals upon entering 1999, the 25th Anniversary year of Ohio's Ethics Law.

"These remarks are typical of the good response we hear from our audiences. Participants find our information very useful and appreciate the opportunity to ask real-life questions and receive practical guidance," stated Ms. Falter.

During 1998, the Ohio Ethics Commission presented 113 educational ethics sessions to a total audience of over 5,200 people. These presentations, conducted by only three

Commission staff members, were made to public officials and employees, and groups of citizens throughout the state. (One of these sessions was conducted in your area.)

The Commission administers Ohio's Ethics Law, which governs conflicts of interest in public officials and employees at the state and local level. The Commission's jurisdiction extends to an estimated 16,000 elected officials and more than 500,000 public officials and employees throughout the state, and includes private sector people who do business with public servants.

One of the Commission's four major responsibilities under Ohio's Ethics Law, in addition to advice, investigation and financial disclosure, is to provide public information and education. The Commission provides free ethics education and information materials, and maintains an Internet website at [www.ethics.state.oh.us](http://www.ethics.state.oh.us). Members and senior staff of the Commission are available to provide information on various Ethics Law topics including conflicts of interest, public contract issues, and financial disclosure, to name just a few. The training is available at no cost. To schedule ethics training, or to receive a copy of the Ethics Law, simply contact Eric Bruce, Trainer, at 614-466-7090.

In 1998, with a change in gubernatorial leadership, the Ethics Commission focused a large segment of its training sessions on the "Revolving Door" limitations of Ohio's Ethics Law. Twenty-six of the 113 public appearances made in 1998 were Revolving Door presentations to nearly 1,500 state, county, and township officials and employees. These Revolving Door presentations were made to many cabinet-level state agencies, the County Auditors' Association, Ohio Municipal League, and the Office of the Governor's Cabinet and Chief Counsel.

The Ohio Ethics Commission is an independent agency of state government charged with interpreting and administering the Ohio Ethics Law for many state and local public officials and employees. The Commission has been serving the public, and state and local governments, since its formation as part of the Ohio Ethics Law in 1973.

