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DEWINE INTRODUCES FUGITIVE SAFE SURRENDER ACT

DeWine Seeks Law That Will Encourage Non-Violent Fugitives To Surrender

U.S. Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH) today introduced legislation that would expand a successful program aimed at encouraging non-violent fugitives with outstanding misdemeanor and felony warrants to surrender to courts that have been temporarily established in churches and community centers.

Fugitive Safe Surrender is a program started last year by Northern District of Ohio U.S. Marshal Pete Elliott and Senior Pastor of the Mt. Sinai Baptist Church Dr. C. Jay Matthews. With the support of public, private, nonprofit and faith-based partners, the program has proved remarkably effective at bringing fugitives in to court. Senator DeWine's Fugitive Safe Surrender Act of 2006 would expand the program nationwide.

"We owe it to our families to find ways to take fugitives off the streets," said Senator DeWine. "The Fugitive Safe Surrender program has proven to be a successful and safe method of bringing fugitives to justice. The people of Cleveland have already benefited from this approach and the program should be used across the country."

In August of 2005, a four-day pilot program in Cleveland netted the peaceful surrender of more than 800 fugitives, including 324 felony fugitives. Almost all of these cases were adjudicated on site and amnesty was not offered for the underlying offenses. In conjunction with traditional methods like fugitive task forces, where law enforcement goes into neighborhoods seeking out fugitives, the Fugitive Safe Surrender Program will make our neighborhoods safer.

Currently the program is not receiving targeted federal funding, and the Fugitive Safe Surrender Act of 2006 is requesting \$3 million for FY 07, \$5 million for FY 08 and \$8 million for FY 09. Among other things, the funding would pay for operations at different sites, the overtime pay for law enforcement officers

involved and the cost of establishing temporary court facilities in churches and community centers. Eight additional cities have already been identified for possible expansion later this year, including Akron.

Senators Pete Domenici (R-NM), Jon Kyl (R-AZ), and John McCain (R-AZ) are cosponsors of this legislation.