

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, September 9, 2013

Contact: Tyler Lowry 614/525-6630
Hanna Greer, 614/525-5848

COMMISSIONER MARILYN BROWN ELECTED TO HEAD REENTRY COALITION
Group Supports Ex-Offenders Throughout Franklin County

Franklin County Commissioner, Marilyn Brown has been elected by her colleagues on the Franklin County Reentry Coalition to serve as the group's chairperson this year. Begun in 2009, the Reentry Coalition is made up of representatives from law enforcement, courts, the City of Columbus, prosecutors, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, providers of resources for ex-offenders, and a number of other interested groups. The coalition advocates on behalf of resource-providers and ex-offenders, and aims to ease the transition back into society for people who have been incarcerated, improve community safety, and reduce recidivism.

"It's a great honor to be a part of this coalition and, particularly, to chair it," said Commissioner Brown. "This group represents a permanent, long-term commitment by all of our local leaders to helping ex-offenders transition back into the community. That's good for the offender, of course, but successful transitions also save money and increase safety, so it's good for the community too. It's also the right thing to do."

The Reentry Coalition is expanding its scope, beginning a partnership with federal courts for the first time, and working with Franklin County Sheriff Zach Scott to provide information, in English or Spanish, about resources to every person who is released from jail.

"The Reentry Coalition, chaired by Commissioner Brown is doing a real service for both offenders and the residents of Franklin County," said Sheriff Scott. "Jail and prison space is expensive, so connecting offenders with job-readiness and life skills training is good for all of us."

The coalition helps to identify successful, evidence-based practices that help ex-offenders to reenter society, and helps to connect inmates with those resources even before they're released from prison.

"The vast majority of inmates will eventually be released," said the commissioner. "We want to them come out ready to be a productive member of society so that they can contribute to the community, take good care of their family, and stay out of the criminal justice system. Early intervention tactics like connecting inmates with community connections and a wide array of resources while still incarcerated gives them a real leg up when they get out."

"I'm very proud of the work we do," Brown said. "We know that it makes a difference."

To obtain a copy of the new resource guide, contact Commissioner Brown's office at 614-525-3461.

###