

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 9, 2015

Contact: Brook Kohn, Policy Manager, 614/525-6638 or 614/323-1940

Paula Brooks, Franklin County, Ohio Commissioner Applauds the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women For Efforts to Combat Violence

The Stopping Sexual Assault for Everyone (SSAFE) Initiative, recently launched by Commissioner Paula Brooks is meeting a critical need, not only in Ohio communities, but around the world by drawing attention to the costs and overall tragedy of sexual assault and violence against women. "I join with women worldwide in calling for urgent action to stop the scourge of violence against women everywhere, including in Ohio. The devastating impact in cost and lost opportunity compels all of us to act now on stopping the violence!"

Today, at the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York City, the United Nations Secretary General will present the findings of a report on the challenges faced in the ongoing struggle to eradicate violence against women. The commission that authored the report presents alarming statistics on the prevalence and incidence of gender-based violence, indicating that approximately 35% of women around the world suffer violence and its consequences, with little recourse to support; even in the U.S. the costs are as shocking as evidenced in the box below.

According to the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence:

- Each rape in the U.S. costs approximately \$151,423.
- Rape is the most costly of all crimes in the U.S., followed by assault, murder, and drunk driving, including fatalities.
- Sexual violence survivors have a lifetime income loss estimated at \$241,600.
- Health care costs are 36% higher for women who were physically and sexually abused as children.
- Approximately 743,000 Ohio adult women are survivors of rape.

<http://www.oaesv.org/>

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon expresses deep concern at the limited progress made on this front, twenty years after the Beijing Platform of Action on women's rights and gender equality was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Commissioner Brooks began her career tackling these and other issues as Director of the Ohio Attorney General's Women's Law Project, where she served as the Attorney General's Special Assistant for policy. Further details can be found at: <http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners/paula-brooks.cfm>

###