

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **COMMISSIONERS AWARDED FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD EMPLOYEES**

The Franklin County Commissioners were awarded the ESGR Pro Patria Award on Saturday. The ESGR (Employer Support of Guard and Reserve) is a Defense Department office with committees in each state that works to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component Service Members and their civilian employers. Franklin County has received previous awards from the Ohio ESGR committee, including the Above and Beyond Award, and as a 5-Star Employer, but the Pro Patria Award is the highest that a state ESGR may bestow.

Franklin County Board of Commissioners president Marilyn Brown accepted the award on the county's behalf. "It is truly an honor to be recognized as an employer that supports our service people," said Brown. "And humbling to work with so many Guard and Reserve members that also have another job keeping our country safe."

The Pro Patria Award is awarded annually to an employer that has demonstrated the greatest level of support to Guard and Reserve employees through leadership and practices, including adopting personnel policies that make it easy for employees to serve.

In 2006, Franklin County Commissioners reaffirmed their commitment to a County policy which provides County employees called to active military duty with continued payment of wages, uninterrupted health and life insurance benefits, and seniority for time spent in active duty including receipt of any pay raises the employee would receive if they were in active employment status. The commissioners went a step further in 2007, establishing an Active Duty Employee Benefit which allows employees under the appointing authority of the Board of Commissioners, and who are called to Active Duty in the National Guard or Military Reserves for a year or more, to be eligible for a benefit equaling five hundred dollars for each of the employee's children.

Commissioner Paula Brooks said that "Like many other Americans, I'm proud of our family's long tradition of service, and understand that employer support for employees who are members of the Guard and Reserve, and their families, is the duty, and honor, for all American employers, as well. This support gives peace of mind to the service member and her/his family members as well. I'm proud that we do our duty, so that they can do theirs."

The County Board of Commissioners were nominated for the ESGR Pro Patria Award by an employee in the county's Job and Family Services department, Jernell Logan, a mother of two and Master Sergeant in the Army Reserve who has worked for the county for 19 years, and has been deployed twice in that time.

"Supporting employees who also serve in the armed services is an easy decision," said Commissioner John O'Grady. "And it's win for everybody. These are excellent public servants for our local residents, and they help keep our country safe. I'm proud to support them; proud to work with them."

The ESGR Pro Patria Award is on display in the Franklin County Commissioners' office on the 26<sup>th</sup> floor at 373 South High Street.

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