

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Unprecedented Event Brings More Than a Thousand Fugitives to Justice**  
*Officials look to expand innovative law enforcement approach taken in Akron to other Ohio cities*

(AKRON, Ohio) – Federal, state and local officials today announced the successful surrender of 1,070 fugitives in Summit County last month through the Fugitive Safe Surrender (FSS) program. From July 29 through Aug. 1, hundreds of fugitives safely resolved outstanding warrants by turning themselves in at the House of the Lord Church in Akron.

The event was unprecedented for FSS partners, which include law enforcement, faith-based and government leaders who work together to provide a safe haven for fugitives to surrender without force. Akron became the first city in the country to host the operation for a second time.

Of the 1,321 individuals who surrendered in Akron, 69 were wanted on felony warrants and 987 were facing outstanding misdemeanor charges. An additional 251 were found to have no warrants pending, and the charges against 14 were unknown. Each of the individuals who surrendered with an active warrant was seen by a judge at the site for immediate disposition of his or her case.

The success has the program's partners looking to expand the program in Ohio.

"We were very pleased with the results in Akron and hope to bring the program to other parts of the state," said Attorney General Richard Cordray. "Each time a fugitive surrenders safely there is one less threat for law enforcement on the street. This operation is a great example of how community and law enforcement can work together and prevail without force."

FSS is an original program of Peter J. Elliott, United States Marshal for the Northern District of Ohio. The program offers people with outstanding warrants an opportunity to take their first step toward a second chance. Temporary courtrooms are built in administrative church offices. Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, deputy sheriffs, police and court clerks then partner on-site for four days to work toward fair case resolution for those who surrender. A pilot FSS event was held in Cuyahoga County in 2005.

"More than 20,000 people have voluntarily surrendered across the nation since we piloted FSS in Cleveland in 2005," said Marshal Elliott. "We are especially pleased with these recent results in Akron because it indicates that FSS can also be successful the second time it's implemented."

In Akron, the outpouring of support from local officials, community members and agencies made this year's operation even more successful than the one in 2007 in which more than 1,100 individuals surrendered. In addition, the program added a new element this year to include the Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA), a division of the Summit County Prosecutor's Office.

“The team decided to add additional support,” said Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh, “for those individuals who also wanted to work out problems related to child support. CSEA had a team at FSS that not only resolved seven criminal non-support cases, but also served 145 absent parents in various other ways. Both the results from FSS and CSEA show that reaching out and providing a one-stop opportunity in a safe environment, benefits everyone.”

Both Akron operations were held at the House of Lord Church which played an integral part in gaining community acceptance and building trust.

““We were excited to partner with the various agencies to give hope to many people who needed a hand up,” said Bishop Joey Johnson.

Other partnering agencies taking part in Akron included the City of Akron and Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic, Akron Urban League, Akron Police, Akron Municipal Court, Summit County Common Pleas Court, Summit County Sheriff Drew Alexander, Summit County Executive Russell Pry, Summit County Engineer Alan Brubaker, the Legal Defender Office of Summit County Ohio, Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the University of Akron School of Law, Regency Inc., WKYC-TV, Clear Channel Outdoor, and Frito Lay of Wooster.

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