



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Investigative Unit**

www.oiu.ohio.gov



### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Ohio Department of Public Safety calling for Bystander Intervention *Don't Turn Your Back, ACT!***

COLUMBUS - Over the last several months, even weeks, more and more incidents of alcohol and/or drug facilitated sexual assaults have been reported in the media. It's happening throughout the country and it's happening in Ohio. The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is calling for bystander intervention.

Sexual assailants can use alcohol and drugs as their weapons to facilitate their assault. In Ohio, it is illegal to have sex with a person who is unwilling or unable to consent because they are intoxicated or have been drugged; or if the sexual assailant plans to get someone intoxicated just for the purpose of assaulting them.

ODPS is urging every Ohioan who may witness these crimes taking place, to call police and if you can safely do so, intervene.

"One sexual assault in Ohio is one too many," said Director John Born. "By intervening you have the opportunity to change how the story ends."

The Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU), a division of ODPS, launched a program in 2012 aimed at raising awareness of this issue and educating liquor permit staff on the proper way to handle these situations. The program, *Don't Turn Your Back, ACT!*, highlights the importance of not over serving alcoholic beverages to bar patrons and for bar patrons to not leave their drinks unattended.

OIU enforces the state's alcohol laws, including violations for providing alcohol to an intoxicated and/or underage person.

The Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS), also a division of ODPS, offers support services for victims of sexual assault. For more on OCJS please see <http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/>.

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