



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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OIU Celebrates 80 Years of Service to Ohio

(Columbus) – Today, the men and women of the Ohio Investigative Unit are celebrating 80 years of service to Ohio. While prohibition ended on December 5, 1933, General Code of Ohio 6064 did not become effective until December 23, 1933.

Included in the code was the creation of the Ohio Department of Liquor Control to oversee the production and sale of alcoholic beverages in the state. The enforcement division fell under then Department of Liquor Control and was charged with conducting investigations of licensed and unlicensed liquor sales locations throughout the state. The agents were also tasked with stopping illegal sales, distribution and manufacturing of beer, and alcohol for public consumption.

In 1995, the enforcement division was transferred to the Ohio Department of Public Safety. Over the years more enforcement efforts have been added including food stamp and tobacco enforcement. In 1999, the enforcement division was renamed the Ohio Investigative Unit. On January 1, 2013, OIU was integrated into the structure of the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

"The liquor industry and laws have changed over the past 80 years, but liquor law enforcement continues to be crucial in the effort to contribute to a safer Ohio," said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director John Born. "I am proud of the work they do each day."

During 80 years of enforcing the state's liquor laws, OIU has been involved in investigating and enforcing cases including bootlegging, moonshine, illegal gambling, drugs, weapons, underage drinking, prostitution and tracing-back the sale of alcohol after an alcohol-related crash.

As OIU celebrates 80 years of service, they would like to honor Agent James Burns who on Nov. 7, 1964, was shot to death in the line of duty as he attempted to arrest a suspect in an illegal liquor sales establishment in Xenia. In 1991, Agent Burns' name was officially dedicated to be placed on the wall at the National Peace Officer's Memorial in Washington, D.C.

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The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations. Follow OIU on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Investigative-Unit/165782203506269> and on Twitter by logging onto http://twitter.com/OIU_OIU.