



Nancy H. Rogers

Attorney General
State of Ohio

September 8, 2008

To My Fellow Ohioans:

The Advisory Committee which has, since June 10, been studying the enormous functions of the Attorney General's Office, has asked me to release the attached report.

The Committee met with me, as well as with my senior staff, often twice a week, to review and discuss the Office and to recommend changes aimed at improving and restoring public confidence in the Attorney General's Office. As noted in the Committee's report, the discussions were broad in scope, knowledgeable and, perhaps above all, candid.

I want to thank each of the Committee members for their considerable efforts. Their contributions throughout the summer and their thoughtful presentation in this Report enable the Office of the Attorney General of Ohio to accomplish many, immediate objectives. Because of this sweeping examination of policies, procedures and practices, the Office already has addressed particular problems and implemented many, crucial changes while, at the same time, elevating our standards for Ohio's 49th Attorney General, who will take office in November of this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy H. Rogers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Nancy H. Rogers
Ohio Attorney General

**REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL NANCY H. ROGERS**

September 8, 2008

Robert M. Duncan, Esq., Chair

T.C. Brown

Elaine H. Hairston, Ph.D.

Robert H. Rawson Jr., Esq.

Gregory G. Lockhart, Esq. (June 10 to June 26, 2008)

The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.

—John Foster Dulles

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Right the Ship.

On May 28, 2008, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland appointed Nancy H. Rogers to be Ohio’s 48th Attorney General. By then, the Ohio Inspector General and other agencies were investigating operations and some employees within the Ohio Attorney General's Office (“AGO” or “the Office”). Governor Strickland handed General Rogers a single request – “right the ship.”

The AGO, as the chief legal advisor for the State of Ohio, enforces a span of laws covering consumer protection, civil rights, the environment, charitable solicitations, Medicaid, anti-trust and organized crime. The Office assists in criminal investigations and trains law enforcement from across the state.

Prescribed by law, these duties must be carried out in a manner that promotes fairness and justice and in a way that transcends politics and changes in administration. In light of recent events, those goals can only be maintained with the restoration of public confidence and a renewed sense from employees that the AGO is now on a steady course that will affirm and preserve a positive institutional culture.

Upon taking office, General Rogers proactively initiated an internal, top-to-bottom examination of the Office’s operations. To buttress those endeavors, General Rogers appointed this bipartisan advisory committee (“the Committee”) from a cross-section of disciplines and experiences in both the public and private sectors. General Rogers urged the Committee to ask “hard questions” and offer “suggestions” related to the policies and practices of the Office.

B. The Committee’s Purpose and Agenda.

The Committee’s agenda has remained both broad and flexible to accommodate a shortage of time and an abundance of topics. The next Attorney General will take office in November 2008. The Committee’s task was sweeping – examine a wide range of policy, procedures and practices within the Office. Its mission was not designed to scrutinize allegations of wrongdoing or criminal activity, issues under mediation, individual personnel situations or pending legal matters, and it did not. It did become clear to us, however, that the AGO’s problems resulted from the actions of only a few, the exceptions to the vast majority of hard working, dedicated public servants within the Office.

From our examination we conclude that Ohio’s citizens benefit from the strong sense of professionalism that the AGO’s staff, both lawyers and non-lawyers, bring to the performance of their duties. This is a theme we will address in some depth later in this report.

The Committee did explore and discuss a wide variety of AGO policies and practices including:

Accountability;
Hiring;

Human Resources;
Assignment of equipment and vehicles;
Outside counsel; and
Professionalism.

C. The Committee's Process and the Role of General Rogers and Her Staff.

Since June, the Committee met frequently with General Rogers and her senior staff, often twice a week for extensive reviews and discussions. We were struck by the enormous range of the Office's functions, which extend well beyond the duty to represent Ohio's agencies, departments, institutions, universities and officeholders. The AGO is a separate and independent arm of state government, with 1,500 employees serving Ohio's citizens while handling more than 35,000 active legal cases for more than 400 clients at any given moment.

General Rogers and her staff were exceedingly cooperative. They compiled voluminous examples of other state and national organizations' "benchmarks" and "best practices" against which to compare the Office's operations. They answered difficult questions on a wide range of topics and pointed to changes and improvements they had already made since May. We found them to be knowledgeable, candid and professional.

D. The Nature of This Report.

This report contains the Committee's recommendations for strengthening the policies, procedures and practices of the AGO as it moves forward. In some instances, we recommend guiding principles. In others, we suggested more specific adjustments. For matters related to past, alleged transgressions, we left that analysis to the agencies already empowered for that work.

Ultimately, no amount of analysis or advice, however thorough or thoughtful, can fully substitute for vigilant leaders who faithfully enforce sound policy. We have concluded that in some cases, the better course is to execute, rather than alter, existing practices and policies. Execution can be achieved through training, supervision and a responsibility-driven institutional culture.

This report is not a panacea for every possible matter that warrants improvement within the Office. We fully expect that future Attorneys General, as well as AGO staff, will continually find room for, and will make, positive changes to the Office.

We strived in all cases to help "right the ship" and offer lasting guidance to General Rogers and future Attorneys General without treading on the discretion and prerogatives that Ohio entrusts to them. Common threads weave throughout these recommendations:

Increase transparency to boost public confidence and accountability.
Deter actions and influences that damage the Office's operation and credibility.
Promote professionalism.
Embrace and reward good works.

We hope that this report will aid General Rogers, future Attorneys General and their staff in a way that fosters an efficient operation that serves all Ohioans, and that one day may be considered a model for Attorneys General from across the nation.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS – TRANSPARENCY AND STABILITY.

A. Bring External Scrutiny to Internal Audits of Hires and Operations.

The Office recently re-tooled its Internal Auditor section, which is responsible for reviewing the efficiency and propriety of operations, including various Human Resource and Equal Employment Officer activities. The Internal Audit Committee, consisting of AGO employees, oversees the Internal Auditor's functions.

We recommend that the Office expand its current internal auditing responsibilities to include an objective, periodic review of hiring decisions and other AGO operations to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. To increase the transparency and independence of these audits, the AGO should add members from the public or private sector with no connection to the AGO to the audit committee.

At least four challenges exist:

1. Determining the criteria by which to measure operations, particularly with respect to hiring decisions, including employee removals and demotions.
2. Mitigating questions of bias that may arise from an in-house audit of operations.
3. Ensuring that regular, external reviews do not become a platform for politically-charged "armchair quarterbacking."
4. Implementing a review mechanism that will last beyond the current administration.

We address each of these challenges in turn:

1. Establish Appropriate Hiring Criteria.

Establish clear and broad criteria that can be used to objectively assess newly-hired employees, especially those considered to be exceptions to standard hiring practices. Framework for a periodic audit report conducted quarterly or semiannually should also be developed. In general, the criteria would satisfy the rigors of common sense. At a minimum, it should include, but not be limited to:

- a. Congruity between the qualifications (*i.e.*, experience, education, accomplishments) of new hires and: a) those new hires' job descriptions; and b) the qualifications of other individuals hired for similar or greater duties and responsibilities.
- b. Confirmation that new hires have submitted to and satisfied checks related to background and criminal records, ethical issues and tax or civil liabilities.
- c. The percentage of employee turnover in a section or division for a given period of time.

2. Bolster Objectivity and Transparency of Internal Audits.

In practice, Internal Auditors review office operations and, in turn, their performance is reviewed by an Internal Audit Committee. Candidly speaking, the public has lost confidence in the propriety of some recent AGO hires and activities. A review by an Internal Auditor and Internal Audit Committee, comprised solely of employees, creates a superficial appearance of self-interest that fails to assuage newly-elevated public concerns.

We recommend that the AGO include two members to the Internal Audit Committee who are not connected in any way to the AGO. The Office can further amplify its transparency and mitigate any appearance of self interest by creating a separate Human Resources Audit Committee that would also include at least two members unrelated to the AGO. The outside members for either committee, appointed by the Attorney General, cannot be AGO employees, related to anyone connected with the Office, be pursuing outside counsel appointments or have contributed more than \$1,000 to the Attorney General's campaign committee.

The Attorney General would not be a member of the Human Resource Audit Committee, but would be able to ask the panel to act prospectively or retrospectively on matters related to unclassified hiring, diversity or related issues.

Such independent membership would help promote candid discussion, thorough examinations and an openness for public disclosure without fear of reprisals from the AGO. Ideally, these new members would be former AGO employees, human resource professionals, judges or academicians.

3. Opening Hiring and Turnover Reviews without Over-Politicizing.

We recommend that the Ohio State Bar Association ("OSBA") establish an AGO committee, appointed by the OSBA president, to periodically examine the process and results found in reports from the Office's Human Resources Committee. This would provide an additional, independent layer of review of any ethical questions raised in AGO hiring practices.

4. Review Mechanism Extending Beyond the Current Administration.

Ideally, future AGO administrations will embrace the opportunity to increase the transparency of their hiring activities. In reality, no such guarantee exists.

Therefore, we recommend one possibility for institutionalizing enhanced hiring reviews. General Rogers could issue an "internal management rule," pursuant to Ohio Revised Code § 111.15, that mandates the criteria and internal auditing structure recommended here. While future administrations could alter such rules, their action would be subject to the public scrutiny that accompanies a formal rule-making process.

5. Status of Recommendations.

These efforts will necessarily require the support and full implementation of succeeding administrations, as well as the coordination and cooperation of people and organizations outside of the Office. General Rogers has already put some internal and external structure in place and assigned staff and resources to begin implementing these recommendations.

B. Clear and Sensible Human Resource Policies that Foster Professional Relationships.

The relationships between some AGO employees drew recent negative attention from the public and media. We found the Office's existing prohibition against sexual harassment to be sound and we urge the AGO to continue to enforce it.

The Committee wholly embraces the prerogative of Attorneys General to assemble their own chosen teams to achieve their administration's goals. Yet it is clear that questionable relationships among the Office's staff imperil effective operations and erode the core professionalism from which the AGO draws its strength. Therefore, we also suggest additional steps to maintain professional relationships among staff.

1. Recommendations.

- a. Fraternalization Policy**—The Office should prohibit consensual romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and those they supervise to avoid even an appearance of conflict. Such relationships, which could lead to inappropriate influences affecting other employees, should be disclosed to Human Resources immediately. Accommodations should be offered for the parties involved to either end the relationship or agree to a transfer.
- b. Independent Equal Employment Officer (“EEO”)**—The Office should establish an EEO unit that is independent from the Human Resources department to highlight a commitment to promptly address any complaints of mistreatment. To accommodate complainants with justifiable concerns that the EEO cannot objectively assess a report, the Office should consider an arrangement with a separate state agency, perhaps DAS, to provide an external option to air such complaints. Moreover, we recommend a reasonable turnaround time, perhaps 30 days, for complaint responses.
- c. Periodic Sexual Harassment Training**—At a minimum, we recommend that managers receive this training at least once at the beginning of each four-year term for Attorneys General.

2. Status of Recommendations.

The Office will soon roll out a fraternization policy to include in the Office's employee handbook.

The AGO has identified several candidates for the EEO position, which will be independent of Human Resources. Arrangements are being finalized with DAS for employees who wish to take their complaints outside of the Office.

An office-wide sexual harassment training program is underway and scheduled for completion prior to the next transition.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS – OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND OBJECTIVITY.

Since we convened, the Committee has worked with General Rogers and her staff to make more detailed operational changes that respond to recent, publicly-exposed events. As previously noted, some changes required a mere tweaking in the form of improved execution. For instance, the AGO has renewed its commitment to apply objective criteria toward the assignment and use of vehicles, technology devices, weapons and other matters.

We also explored benchmarks from other organizations and agencies as well as various suggestions offered by the AGO staff. That examination resulted in some changes and refinement of the Office's practices. We have opted to itemize rather than detail each individual change in the main body of this report. We briefly describe the responsive action that either has or will be taken.

This call for operational changes is not meant to suggest widespread abuse by AGO staff, which by and large conscientiously serves the public. Rather it represents a move in the right direction – a measured, sensible effort to increase transparency, objectivity and efficiency for practices that warranted clarification or else were called into question by the actions of a limited few.

A. Proper Assignment and Use of Technological Tools.

Revelations of embarrassing, non-work-related and occasionally profane electronic communications among a few in the Office rightly induced negative public reaction. The situation revealed the need to examine the assignment and use of technology devices.

The Office has a sound policy that reasonably limits the personal use of AGO-issued communication devices and e-mail accounts. The majority of staff who act responsibly should continue to enjoy convenient access to these tools to better perform their duties. We recommend a balanced, practical and common sense approach in assigning devices, with clear guidelines for use. The Office should continue to demand, and employees should continue to meet, high standards of professionalism. Violators should be singled out for disciplinary measure.

1. Recommendations—Identify, Simplify and Justify.

- a. Identify – Division Chiefs should work with their respective Section Chiefs to review all outstanding technology assignments and reassess those decisions for appropriateness and duplication. Division Chiefs should confirm all reviews and recommend any changes to the Chief of Policy and Administration.
- b. Simplify – Eradicate duplicative technology assignments, eliminate unnecessary use of assigned devices and re-emphasize the requirement to use equipment for business only.
 - i. Wireless Hand-held Devices (*i.e.*, “Blackberries”)
 - Revise policy to highlight personal liability for damage to devices resulting from careless handling.
 - Assignments of these or similar devices must be issued pursuant to the process defined in Item c, below.

- ii. Text Messaging – Limit to law enforcement officers in the field.
- iii. Laptops – Issue on an as-needed basis, especially for employees who use desktop computers.
- c. Justify – Assignment of equipment should follow the “chain of command” and be based on previous responsible use by an employee. Section Chiefs, in writing, would show that new technology assignments: (I) satisfy the objective criteria in Chapter 3 of the Policies and Procedures manual; and (II) are not duplicative. To ensure consistency and to centralize monitoring, these requests would be subject to the approval of the Division Chief and the Chief of Policy and Administration.

2. Status of Recommendations.

The AGO has implemented this policy and has revised its employee manual (Chapter 3) to reflect these recommendations.

B. Appropriate Allocation and Use of Vehicles.

Reports of past vehicle misuse drew both public and investigative scrutiny. That attention triggered concerns about how vehicles were assigned and used. In our view, objective standards for assignment and clear-use guidelines would help ameliorate those issues.

1. Recommendations.

The AGO staff benchmarked prevailing practices on the assignment and use of vehicles from the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (“DAS”). Based on those benchmarks and discussions with AGO staff, we recommend that the Office reassess its permanent vehicle assignments and enforce a vehicle management policy that parallels DAS.

2. Status of Recommendations.

The Office has adopted an objective DAS-modeled policy in which vehicles are assigned on need-and-mileage-based criteria for strictly enforced AGO-business use only. Going forward, the Office will limit “cover plates” for permanently assigned cars to one per office location. The AGO withdrew nine permanent vehicle assignments, recycling five for law enforcement use. The rest are available for temporary assignments. The AGO recently turned over three cars to DAS for salvage to make room for more fuel-efficient and task-appropriate vehicles.

C. Judicious Assignment of Weapons.

Prior to 2007, the AGO authorized only employees who are Bureau of Criminal Investigation & Identification (“BCI&I”) peace officers to carry firearms. AGO employees who might need additional protection to safely execute their duties were asked to enlist BCI&I or other local law enforcement to escort them. The policy was changed in 2007, permitting Health Care Fraud Investigators to carry weapons on an as-needed, supervisor-approved basis.

1. Recommendations.

Because the Committee takes seriously the issue of balancing personal safety and the proper handling of firearms, we recommend that the Office return to its pre-2007 practice. That policy better serves the overall interests of safety. Peace officer escorts can provide protection for AGO employees, which leaves the handling of firearms to highly-trained law enforcement staff.

2. Status of Recommendations—The Office re-instituted the pre-2007 policy.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS – OUTSIDE COUNSEL ALTERATIONS.

A. Cultivate and Refine Current Progress Toward an Objective, Broad-Based Outside Counsel Program.

Assignments of outside counsel hold the potential for both negative and positive feedback. They may be viewed in a way that some see as a political payback, or they can manifest in a manner that reveals the Office's efforts to find the best, most cost-effective legal services for Ohio's agencies and educational institutions.

Regrettably, recent events have obscured significant steps to re-organize and revamp the Outside Counsel Program. In conjunction with an advisory committee of experienced, non-conflicted attorneys, the AGO has developed an objective process for selecting counsel and distributing assignments to a broader base of professionals. We *strongly* recommend that the Office propel this momentum into future administrations.

Encouraged by the foundation already laid, we agree with an AGO suggestion to add a member of the OSBA to the advisory committee and strongly concur with the formation of a second group composed of the Office's clients to discuss the effectiveness of the Outside Counsel program.

B. Status of Recommendations.

After the two advisory boards conclude their meetings, an additional report with added focus and more specific recommendations for the Outside Counsel Program will be issued. In so doing, the recommendations will explore some of the following considerations:

Establishment of fair and transparent criteria to select the best counsel for required legal services.

Development of mechanisms to monitor the budget and quality of counsel's services.

Inclusion of an array of professionals fairly reflecting the diversity of Ohio's people. Participation by at least one assistant attorney general to oversee each matter handled by outside counsel.

Client satisfaction with the AGO's quality of service, ethical representation and responsiveness.

Robert Duncan and Robert Rawson abstained from discussions on this issue.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS – MAINTAIN SOLID FOUNDATIONS.

A. Strengthen the Commitment to Professionalism and Deter Actions and Influences that Threaten to Weaken It.

The AGO's strength and resilience lies in its stable cadre of dedicated professionals. The Office is no mere training ground or stop along a legal or political career path. In reality, the spine of the Office consists of long-time attorneys, law enforcement officers and support staff who embrace the AGO's crucial mission. They often forego more lucrative opportunities, opting instead for the satisfaction of providing important public service.

These dedicated professionals forge careers while developing deep levels of expertise. Their commitment to the mission manifests a high degree of professionalism that guides and inspires peers. It also aids in recruiting new employees, especially young attorneys who are given a chance to show their mettle and hone new skills with immediate, substantial responsibilities on significant matters.

In this section, we address the challenge to strengthen and shield against external threats to the core professionalism that makes the Office strong.

1. Foster Career Paths in Public Service.

To ensure the Office's stability and vitality, it is imperative that the AGO retain these dedicated professionals. No state agency can compete with private sector compensation levels. Yet it is essential that the Office remain on a level playing field. Below, we outline broad steps for the AGO:

- a. Monitor private compensation trends for comparison to public service positions and, whenever resources permit, adjust those levels to remain competitive.
- b. Provide clear promotion paths that reward initiative, creativity, leadership, performance and outstanding professionalism, much like the Office's current efforts to promote assistant attorneys general to "Associate," "Senior" and "Principal." Develop a companion program for non-legal professionals.
- c. Re-institute public and office-wide recognition for those who exhibit extraordinary professionalism and commitment.
- d. Launch a formal mentoring system that couples new graduates and lateral hires with long-time professionals.
- e. The political nature of the AGO creates circumstances in which long-time attorneys are reluctant to take on administrative, managerial duties out of concern their careers will be derailed by a new Attorney General. We encourage new administrations to strive to preserve the institutional knowledge critical for the Office by carefully considering, and retaining when possible, the competent attorneys and managers already on board.

Status of Recommendations: The Office has already implemented steps "a" and "b", above. The AGO is developing the logistics for implementing steps "c" and "d", above. The current administration has followed the practice set forth in "e."

2. Focus on a Culture of Professionalism, Civility, Service and Diversity.

High degrees of professionalism, civility, dedication and diversity among AGO employees translates to a well-run operation. But the press of business, changing short-term priorities and the interplay of varying personalities can sidetrack these objectives. We recommend some straightforward steps to imbue and maintain a culture within the Office that ceaselessly embraces these core components.

a. Office Culture.

- i. Adopt and promote a formal statement of the AGO mission, vision and values (*i.e.*, transparency, civility, ethics, diversity). These concepts should be touted in recruitment visits and interviews, employee orientation and handbooks, office literature, management plans and training programs.
- ii. Provide mandatory training for new managers, which include components of sexual harassment, ethics, public records and discipline.
- iii. Promote opportunities for direct contact and feedback between the Attorney General and AGO employees to instill a sense of community and emphasize a shared stake in mission.

Status of Recommendations: The Office’s Professional Development Committee has adopted “PRIDE” to formally describe AGO culture, representing:

Personal responsibility
Respect
Integrity and innovation
Diversity
Ethics and excellence

The Office will immediately begin weaving these themes into its recruitment activities, orientations, literature, management plans and training.

General Rogers has adopted the practice of weekly Monday messages to the office to recognize achievements and developments. Each Friday, she meets with employees in small numbers to discuss events and entertain questions and concerns. General Rogers regularly invites managers to lunch to explore topics of interest with invited speakers from within and outside of the Office.

Ethics, sexual harassment and public records trainings have been ongoing. Planning is underway to incorporate those elements, as well as discipline training, into a formal procedure for new managers in time for the next administration.

b. Diversity.

The Office has had some success in building a diverse team of professionals. In the past, diversity has depended on “top-down” directions. While such efforts might succeed, they can be prone to varying levels of interest and priorities.

We recommend an additional, parallel approach – from the “bottom up” – to enhance diversity. The AGO should establish a standing committee of minority employees, including legal and non-legal professionals, and other staff who support a diverse workforce. The group should meet regularly to discuss improving and retaining a diverse team of professionals. A sub-group of this body should be appointed to track, coordinate and evaluate those efforts.

We envision the production of a formal statement from the Office about its introspective look at diversity, which could include declarations from employees who have benefited by such outreach. Those beneficiaries can help recruit by appearing on campuses and before professional organizations. Furthermore, embedding this material on an AGO Web page can draw additional prospects searching for careers online.

Status of Recommendations: The Office has developed a formal statement of its “Diversity Vision.” Minority and other interested employees have begun formulating a plan to identify and implement efforts to increase diversity.

VI. ABOUT THE COMMITTEE.

Retired Judge Robert M. Duncan first served in the Franklin County Municipal Court. In 1969, he was elected to the Ohio Supreme Court where he served until his appointment as Judge and eventually Chief Judge of the United States Court of Military Appeals. He was then appointed to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. He resigned from the judiciary in 1985 and became a partner with Jones Day. Today, he serves as the Moritz College's Distinguished Jurist in Residence and on the Board of Trustees of The Ohio State University.

T.C. Brown was an award-winning journalist at the Cleveland Plain Dealer's Statehouse Bureau in Columbus for 17 years. Mr. Brown has written for numerous local, state and national publications and this year was a Climate Change Digital Media Fellow at the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University. Currently, Mr. Brown is a free-lance multimedia producer, writer, editor and consultant.

Elaine H. Hairston, Ph.D., is Chancellor Emerita of the Ohio Board of Regents and currently Senior Consultant for Academic Search, Inc. in Washington, D.C. Dr. Hairston is the past national President of the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, a former Director of the Huntington National Bank and former Vice President of The Ohio Historical Society. She also chaired the Alumni Advisory Council of The Ohio State University.

Robert (“Bob”) H. Rawson Jr. is a partner with the law firm of Jones Day, based in the firm's Cleveland Office, and has served as that firm's managing partner. Mr. Rawson is currently Chairman of the National Civic League and Chairman of the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education. He has been a member of the Board of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights and is past Chairman of the Cleveland Initiative for Education. Bob is a member of the ABA (Antitrust Law, Litigation, and Law Practice Management Sections), the Ohio State Bar Association (Antitrust Section), the Cleveland Bar Association, and the Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

Gregory G. Lockhart (serving on the Committee from June 10 to June 26, 2008) was sworn in as United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio on October 17, 2001. He was nominated by

President Bush on September 4, 2001 and confirmed by the Senate on October 11, 2001. Prior to his appointment as United States Attorney, Mr. Lockhart was an Assistant United States Attorney since 1987, prosecuting all violations of federal law, including contract fraud, murder, firearms, drugs, money laundering, mail and wire fraud, organized crime, gambling, bank robbery, grand jury investigations and wire intercepts.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The assistance provided by General Rogers, her senior staff and other AGO employees proved invaluable to us in examining the Office's practices and policies and in formulating this report. We would also be remiss in failing to acknowledge input and assistance from the following individuals and organizations:

The U.S. Department of Justice, with special thanks to William J. Edwards, Esq., Acting U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio and Christopher K. Barnes, Esq., Assistant Director, Executive Office for United States Attorneys

The Ohio Inspector General's Office with special thanks to Ohio Inspector General Thomas P. Charles and Arnie J. Schropp, Jr., First Assistant Inspector General

The Ohio State Bar Association with special thanks to Gary Leppla, Esq., President and William K. Weiseberg, Assistant Executive Director for Public Affairs, Government Relations and Diversity Initiatives

The Outside Counsel Advisory Committee for the Ohio Attorney General's Office: Judge (retired) C. Ellen Connally; Samuel Fried, Esq., Limited Brands; Mark Inzetta, Esq., Wendy's International, Inc.; and R. L. Richards, Esq., Trustee, R. David Thomas Trust

Jim Kemper, Director of Organization and Human Resource Consulting, The Ohio State University Office of Human Resources

Felicia Bernardini, Bernardini Consulting Services

VIII. CONCLUSION.

In the wake of the AGO's turmoil earlier this year, Gary Leppla, president of the OSBA, noted that while a few strayed from commitments to professionalism, the Office still maintained a rich, commendable history of public service that continues to be exhibited by the majority of its dedicated employees. Despite multiple investigations and high-profile management changes, the AGO never ceased performing its important work. It has even thrived.

Our collective desire is that this examination and report will aid General Rogers and the Office in continuing to "right the ship." The core professionalism of the AGO is its foundation, strength and springboard for future progress. We have tried to offer guidance to preserve and protect that nucleus. General Rogers and the AGO staff have demonstrated a robust commitment to rebuild and re-focus the Office. They have already implemented or set in motion every recommendation we have offered.

To succeed, even the best policies and practices ultimately rely on leaders who are vigilant, motivated public servants who surround themselves with like-minded professionals. From our perspective, the AGO has those components in place and stands ready to serve Ohio well under the next administration.