



Ohio Children's Hospital Association

Saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

For immediate release

December 4, 2014

Nick Lashutka, President, Ohio Children's Hospital Association, today issued the following statement in response to Ohio Governor Kasich's announcement at today's Ohio Infant Mortality Summit to foster statewide efforts to improve the state's infant mortality rate.

We applaud the governor's announcement today to ramp up efforts in Ohio to combat infant mortality and are especially pleased that he signed House Bill 465 into law, designating the first week of July as "Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) Awareness Week." We would also like to thank Representative Dr. Terry Johnson and Senator Shannon Jones, who were instrumental in passing this law, for their leadership and attention to this complex issue.

We have been fortunate to help spearhead collaborative research efforts on NAS, which the Governor helped to make possible, yet we know we all must work together to continue conducting research, identifying strategies and raising awareness throughout the state to combat the crisis we are facing.

As the Governor said today, it's simply "unacceptable that more than 1,000 Ohio babies die each year before their first birthday."

Fortunately, our state's outstanding children's hospitals, which are headquartered in most of the "hot spot" communities identified by the governor today, stand ready to work side-by-side with healthcare providers, Ohio lawmakers and Governor Kasich's administration to continue to identify ways in which Ohio can ensure that more Ohio babies reach their first birthday and have a long, healthy life to follow.

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More information about the Ohio Children's Hospital Association is available at ohiochildrenshospitals.org.
Media Contact: Angela Krile, angela@krilecommunications.com, 740-974-3948