

**REMARKS AS PREPARED
MIKE DEWINE
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL SWEARING-IN CEREMONY
STATEHOUSE ROTUNDA
COLUMBUS, OH
JANUARY 9, 2011**

Father Tom, Judge Rose, Judge DeWine, Justice O'Connor, Governor-elect Kasich, fellow elected officials, and all my family and friends -- thank you! Thank you all for being here today.

I am honored to take the Oath of Office of the Attorney General of the State of Ohio in this magnificent and historic Rotunda of the Statehouse, surrounded by my family and friends.

We observe today the continuation of what began in 1846, when Ohio's first Attorney General took office. I am now the 50th Attorney General honored to serve the people of Ohio. I want to thank my predecessor, Attorney General Richard Cordray for his cooperation, good will, and professionalism in this transition. He has clearly demonstrated what he told me on Election Night -- and that is that he very deeply cares about the Office of the Attorney General.

The job of an Attorney General dates back to England and the 13th Century, with the King's lawyer serving as his counsel, but also as a guardian of the public interest.

While the Office has certainly evolved over time, and the Attorney General today no longer represents the King, the Attorney General does represent the Governor and other state officials. But also, the Attorney General has a solemn responsibility to the State and to the people of the State.

In Ohio, unlike some states, our Attorney General is independently elected by the people -- for the people. What the Attorney General owes to the Governor and all other statewide office holders is good judgment and wise counsel. What the Attorney General owes to the people of Ohio, as I pledged in my oath, is to seek the truth and to seek justice.

I believe that the job of the Attorney General is to be fiercely independent and to be above politics. I will call it like I see it!

The job of the Attorney General is to speak out when there is injustice, to take action against public wrong-doing, and to uphold the rule of law.

And, the job of the Attorney General is to protect our children and our families -- and protect the most vulnerable among us.

My number one priority as Attorney General will be to protect families. I will be an Attorney General who thinks like a prosecutor. It was as Greene County Prosecutor that I saw first-hand

the pain and anguish of crime victims and their families. I have never forgotten that -- and never will.

I know that my job as Attorney General is not to be the "top cop." Rather my job is to serve and assist the good men and women on the front lines of law enforcement -- the men and women who are serving the people of Ohio -- risking their lives to protect us.

Clark County Deputy Sheriff Suzanne Hopper was one of those brave public servants. As you know, she was tragically killed in the line of duty on New Year's Day. I ask for a moment of silence at this time to honor and remember her and her family and to honor and remember all of our brave law enforcement officers who have died serving us and those who are out there -- at this very moment -- protecting our families and communities.

Let us also remember the victims of yesterday's tragic shooting in Arizona.

[MOMENT OF SILENCE]

When Clark County law enforcement needed assistance when Deputy Hopper was killed, it was the investigators from the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation or BCI who were there on the scene. When anyone in Ohio is a victim of a violent crime, and the local police or the sheriff gathers evidence, it is the men and women at BCI who work together with local law enforcement and the county prosecutor to bring criminals to justice.

When local law enforcement need training about how to collect and conserve evidence or how to proceed during a shooting or a burglary or a homicide, our job is to teach them how to properly handle dangerous and life-threatening situations through the experienced instructors at the Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy or OPOTA and through the use of over 200 adjunct instructors from police departments; sheriffs offices; the Attorney General's office, itself; and others in the law enforcement community.

When our aging parents or grandparents are being misled and getting ripped off and scammed, our job in the Attorney General's Office is to protect them from fly-by-night con artists.

When a young family is just starting out, our job is to protect that family from mortgage fraud.

And, when Washington goes too far and encroaches on our Constitutional rights, as Attorney General -- I will be there to defend Ohio!

As Abraham Lincoln, near whose statue I am honored to stand today, once said, "Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained, for it is the only safeguard for our liberties."

On this special day, with all of our family together, I think of those who are not here -- my parents, Dick and Jean DeWine, our daughter Becky, and our granddaughter Kathryn Becky.

Over the years, I have learned that our time here on Earth is short. And that is why I have tried, as best I could, to focus on things that really matter and on things that I could really impact.

As Attorney General, I know in my heart that I can truly make a difference for Ohio families.

And each day that I am Attorney General, I will remember that time is precious and finite.

I will not waste a day.

When I walk in to the Attorney General's office tomorrow -- I will be ready to go. I will walk through that door with a plan and will be ready to get to work!

Let me conclude on a personal note.

Today really is a joyous day for me because I am surrounded by my best friend and bride of over 43 years, Frances, and by our children, grandchildren, and extended family. Nothing in this world makes me happier than to be with my family -- and I thank each and every one of you for your love and your support for all of these years -- and for being willing to join me -- and put up with me -- on the many campaign roads we have traveled together!

As many of you know, Greene County Ohio has always been my home and Fran's home. And, I am very pleased to have Greene County so closely tied into this ceremony today. I am honored to follow in the footsteps of a fellow Greene County resident and former Greene County Prosecutor, John Little, who served as Ohio Attorney General from 1873 to 1877.

When I was Prosecutor -- and let me interject that I am honored that Judge Herman Weber, who swore me in as Prosecutor, here with us today -- each day I would pass by the portrait of John Little in the Courthouse -- the very Courthouse he was instrumental in getting built.

Our paths in public service share similarities. In addition to both being Greene County Prosecutors and Ohio Attorneys General, we were also both members of the state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives.

Don't get me wrong -- I'm not trying to compare myself to John Little. After all, he only had two kids!

In all seriousness, though, my entire career, starting as Prosecutor, has prepared me for this moment -- for the honor and for the solemn responsibility of being Ohio's 50th Attorney General.

Now is an incredibly exciting and challenging time in Ohio history. We have the opportunity to completely rethink how we do everything in state government. In doing so, we need to be bold and innovative in all that we do! Simply put, we cannot run state government the same way we have always run it!

As Attorney General, I intend to be bold and think differently and creatively in pursuit of my responsibilities to the law and to the people.

Our goal is to make BCI the leading criminal investigation and analysis agency in the country.

Our goal is to make OPOTA a premier teaching institution for Ohio law enforcement personnel.

Our goal is help create the kind of legal climate in this State that encourages businesses to invest and create jobs.

And, our goal is to root out public corruption to help insure that government in this State is worthy of our citizens.

Winston Churchill once said that “a pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity [and that] an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

Without question, Ohio has faced its share of difficulties. But it is in those trials and in those tribulations that I see the amazing opportunities -- and, candidly, the responsibilities -- we now have before us to create a new Ohio and a bright, promising, and safe future for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you all very much!