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PRESS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR'S BUDGET INCLUDES NEW MONEY FOR COUNTY EMAs

(LIMA, OH) – Governor Taft's proposed state budget for 2002-2003 just released on Monday includes two million dollars of funding for county emergency management programs. Allen County EMA director, Russ Decker applauds the move "We were hoping the Governor would put the funding in his budget and we are very pleased to see his strong commitment to emergency management at the local level." Decker said.

"The funding will continue efforts begun with SB239 last year," Decker explained "that bill, sponsored by Bob Cupp, provided one million dollars of state money to be directed to the county level for emergency preparedness work here. The landmark bill marked the first time state funds had been allocated to assist counties with the funding of their emergency management program."

SB239 funding is currently funding a variety of EMA projects locally. In Allen County the money will purchase 110 tone activated warning radios for all schools and other public buildings. In Auglaize county it will help purchase a vehicle for that county's hazardous materials response. In all, 82 of Ohio's 88 counties will receive some type of benefit from SB239 dollars.

"Again, we applaud the step taken Monday by the Governor to continue this critical funding. We would expect support in the General Assembly since SB239 passed unanimously in both houses last year. However with so many new members this session our county directors' association will actively lobby for the measures passage." Decker said.