

Monthly Columns

by Attorney General Jack Conway



December 2009

The start of a new year is both a time for reflection and hope. It is a time to take stock in all that we have achieved and all we hope to accomplish as we begin a new year. Although these have been trying times, I know I join many of you in counting the blessings the past year has brought.

As many Kentucky families struggled to make ends meet in 2009, my office also felt the pain of the lingering recession. Since taking office in January 2008, my budget has been cut 23% and more painful cuts are on the horizon.

As Attorney General, I have made it a priority to make Kentucky a safer place to live, work and raise a family. Achieving this in the midst of an unprecedented state budget crisis has not been easy. However, by streamlining operations and forging new partnerships, I am proud to say that we have not only protected the mission critical functions of this office, but implemented new initiatives to better protect Kentucky families.

Over the past several months, my staff has been preparing our 2009 Biennial Report to be released to Governor Beshear and members of the General Assembly. My staff and I would like to share highlights from the report to let you know some of what we've achieved for Kentucky families.

Cybercrimes & Cybersafety

- Created a Cybercrimes Unit devoted solely to investigating crimes that occur online, particularly Internet predators who target Kentucky kids. The unit seized more than 34,000 child porn images and videos, opened 80 cases and made 9 arrests.
- Wrote comprehensive Cybercrimes legislation to bring Kentucky laws up-to-date with technology. The 2009 General Assembly passed HB 315 and Gov. Beshear signed it on March 26, 2009. The law became effective in June 2009.

- Presented 100 cybersafety programs reaching 24,000 Kentuckians, primarily children and their parents.

Drug Diversion

- Created Kentucky's first statewide prescription drug abuse task force to focus on investigations into doctor shopping, drug trafficking, overprescribing physicians and illegal out-of-state pharmacies.
- 277 drug investigation cases opened.
- 9,810 pills seized (street value of \$20,250).
- 100 arrests on 219 counts.
- OAG Drug Diversion Task Force participated in historic Kentucky drug sweep, resulting in the arrest of more than 300 people in 34 counties.

Gas Prices

- Fined retailers more than \$100,000 for price-gouging in the wake of Hurricane Ike.
- Requested Federal Trade Commission review of merger of Marathon and Ashland Oil and its impact on Kentucky petroleum market. Request followed an investigation by General Conway and Gov. Beshear into the wholesale price of gasoline in Louisville.

Consumer Protection

- Obtained relief of more than \$4.5 million in loans for 2,200 students of now-defunct Decker College.
- Settlement with Countrywide to restructure \$262 million in mortgage loans and obtained \$1.64 million in restitution for Kentucky victims.

Medicaid Fraud & Abuse

- Tripled the number of elder abuse investigations.

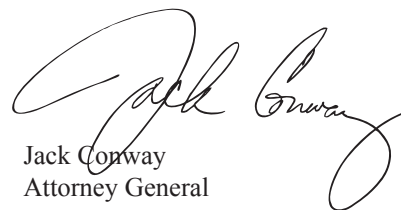
- Recovered or was awarded more than \$63 million in state and federal dollars.

Rate Intervention

- Saved Kentucky consumers more than \$91 million in proposed utility rate increases.

To learn more about our accomplishments and services available through my office, please review our entire Biennial Report available on our website at <http://bit.ly/81DjUQ>. It is because of the hard work and dedication of my entire staff that we have achieved so many of our goals.

I would also like to thank Kentucky parents and local law enforcement whose input helped shape my agenda as Attorney General, as well as the members of the General Assembly who have been steadfast partners in our effort to move Kentucky forward.



Jack Conway
Attorney General