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## **Tennessee to launch statewide automated victim notification service/ Country Music Legend Charlie Daniels lends his support**

*New system to monitor an offender's custody status*

**Nashville, Tn.** – The Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence along with the Tennessee Sheriffs' Association today launched the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) network with the premier of Country Music Legend Charlie Daniels' public service announcement. The automated service will allow Tennessee crime victims and their families to receive real-time information about the custody status of offenders housed in county jails. As with other statewide systems, users can register to be notified of certain custody status changes such as release, transfer, or escape.

Users can call 1-888-TNVINE1 (888-868-4631) or log onto [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com) to find out if an offender is in a county jail. They can also register to be notified by phone, e-mail, pager, or TTD/TTY device when an offender is released, transferred, or escapes. Live operators are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to assist victims who need help obtaining offender information or registering for notification. Technical support professionals monitor and maintain SAVIN to ensure high reliability and availability of this potentially life-saving service. SAVIN is free to the public.

“Our goal is to ensure that victims and their families are given timely and reliable information that allows them to protect themselves and fully participate in the criminal justice process,” said Kathy Walsh, the Coalition's Executive Director. “Information sharing through SAVIN will protect our citizens from further victimization while maintaining total anonymity.”

Users registering by telephone must provide a number where they can be reached and a four-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) will be assigned by the Victim Service Unit. If registering online, a valid e-mail address must be provided. The service is available in both English and Spanish.

The implementation of Tennessee SAVIN is being funded by a Federal grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. BJA is working to create a National Victim Notification Network. Since 2005, the SAVIN grant program has nearly doubled the number of states providing automated victim notification.

The coalition has contracted with Appriss® Inc., a Louisville, Kentucky-based technology company that provides resources to criminal justice and victims of crime. Tennessee joins 43 other states that have launched statewide victim notification using Appriss technology and services.

“We anticipate having fifty of Tennessee's ninety-five counties on-line by the end of the year and plan to bring an additional twenty-five counties on to the system next year” said Walsh. “As our BJA grant is an implementation grant only, during the next legislative session we will approach the Governor and the Tennessee General Assembly about allocating state dollars to continue the program beyond the grant period.”

### **About the Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence**

Established as a non-profit organization in 1983, the Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence provides training and technical assistance to communities statewide. Since its inception, the Coalition has:

- Expanded the number of programs serving victims of domestic and sexual violence from 5 to more than 60. These programs annually provide services to over 60,000 victims.
- Created the Immigrant Legal Clinic providing legal advice and representation to immigrant and trafficked victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- Developed the nationally recognized *Improving Law Enforcement's Response to Domestic and Sexual Violence Project* training more than 8,000 Tennessee officers.
- Helped create more than 100 new laws designed to provide safety and resources for victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Established the Domestic Violence State Coordinating Council responsible for developing model policies and training curriculum for law enforcement and courts and rules for certified batterers' intervention programs.

### **About the Tennessee Sheriff's Association**

The Tennessee Sheriff's Association (TSA) is a non-profit educational organization founded in 1971. TSA's purpose is to promote better and more effective law enforcement; maintain a high level of ethical conduct on the part of all sheriffs and their deputies; provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience among all sheriffs; establish the highest degree of cooperation among the law-enforcing agencies in the State of Tennessee; bring the sheriffs of the various counties into close association and to promote cooperation in the conduct of the laws of Tennessee pertaining to the apprehension and prosecution of persons violating the laws of Tennessee; improve and encourage greater efficiency in the administration of sheriffs' offices.

### **About Appriss**

Appriss provides innovative technology solutions that help thousands of local, state, and Federal government agencies serve and protect their citizens. Other innovative services include VINE Protective Order®, which automatically notifies petitioners when protective orders are served on respondents; JusticeXchange®, the leading solution connecting criminal justice agencies nationwide; SONAR®, an automated tool that keeps communities informed on the whereabouts of registered sex offenders; and MethCheck®, which allows law enforcement to monitor the purchases of pseudoephedrine, a key component in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

### **About BJA**

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, supports law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, victim services, technology, and prevention initiatives that strengthen the nation's criminal justice system. BJA provides leadership, services, and funding to America's communities by emphasizing local control; building relationships in the field; developing collaborations and partnerships; promoting capacity building through planning; streamlining the administration of grants; increasing training and technical assistance; creating accountability of projects; encouraging innovation; and ultimately communicating the value of justice efforts to decision-makers at every level.