



Florida Sheriffs Association 2016 Legislative Priorities

Protection for Families of Fallen Law Enforcement Officers (Deputy Pine Bill)

Support legislation to give the surviving spouse or children of a Special Risk Class member killed in the line of duty the option to switch in to the FRS Pension Plan (defined benefit program) instead of accepting the one-time payout of funds from the FRS Investment Plan. This flexibility to opt into the Pension Plan will provide the surviving spouse or children the opportunity to be financially protected.

Releasing Security System Videos to Solve Crimes

Support legislation to fix a glitch that prevents law enforcement from releasing security system videos to other law enforcement agencies, their local state attorney's office for prosecution, and the media to help identify suspects. Issues have arisen from a recent 5th District Court Appeal's decision holding that security system videos are confidential and exempt from all disclosure. Florida must amend its public records laws in order to allow law enforcement officers to release videos to news outlets as a means to identify suspects and for other official business.

Body-Worn Cameras for Law Enforcement

Support legislation that creates an exemption from Chapter 934 (Florida's wiretap statute) to aid in the successful use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement. Under Chapter 934, F. S., a person must consent before their communications may lawfully be recorded, including recording by law enforcement officers in many situations. A violation of current law is a felony and raises a civil cause of action. In addition, if a person has a reasonable expectation that their conversation is not subject to recording, any audio recorded by a body-worn camera would be illegal and not admissible in court. As sheriffs' offices begin to utilize body-worn cameras for their deputies, this new technology will capture not just video but audio from conversations that deputies have with citizens every day. As currently written, this law has great potential to hinder the implementation of body-worn camera programs.



Florida Sheriffs Association Legislative Platform

Prevention & Youth Services

Juvenile Detention: Support Sheriffs' authority to operate juvenile detention facilities under current law.

Civil Citations: Oppose a statewide mandate of issuing civil citations to all juveniles, and support enhanced data collection to ensure deputies have the most up-to-date information available to them before issuing a civil citation.

Law Enforcement

Protect Asset Forfeiture: Oppose legislation that would remove law enforcement's ability to legally seize criminals' assets and then utilize these assets to purchase critical public safety equipment.

Unreasonable Restrictions to Law Enforcement's Access to Information: Support tools currently used by law enforcement to ensure public safety.

Red Light Traffic Camera Operations: Oppose efforts to eliminate the use of cameras to enforce red light traffic violations.

Jails, Corrections & Re-Entry

Early Release: Support Truth in Sentencing laws requiring convicted criminals to serve at least 85% of their sentence.

Mandatory Minimum Sentencing: Oppose the elimination of mandatory minimum sentences.

Expunction of Criminal Records: Oppose unlimited expunction of criminal records.

State Sentencing: Oppose the sentencing of state inmates to county jails, but support sheriffs' ability to individually contract with the Department of Corrections for housing state inmates.

Gaming

Gambling: Oppose the expansion of any gambling, including Casino Resorts or Internet poker.

Administration

Florida Retirement System: Support the authorization of a special impact study to estimate the financial impact and necessary funding required for the expiration of the COLA suspension formula.

Budget

Community Mental Health Funding: Support funding for mental health services that will assist persons after they are released from county jails and have to transition back into the community.