

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JIMMY PATRONIS' RUNDOWN

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

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Floridians,

This morning, I [spoke](#) at the Florida Police Association's (PBA) Annual Meeting in Cape Coral. It's tougher than ever to be in law enforcement, and I wanted the women and men of the PBA to know that Florida loves and appreciates them. My full speech is below. I hope you enjoy it and have a great weekend!



REMARKS AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Good morning!

It's great to be at the PBA's Annual Conference here in beautiful Cape Coral.

Thank you to Matt for the kind words.

Matt has been doing a lot work with our office in helping us support all of you.

I have known Matt for 12-13 years and worked with him a bunch in the Legislature.

Also, thank you to John for your work in supporting Florida's law enforcement community.

It's great to be here because I love being around law enforcement.

Whenever there's a parade, or festival, or football game – there's always a few officers or sheriff's deputies.

They're smiling, they're helping people, they're helping out with traffic and keeping people safe.

Outside of all the fun events, however, police are the tip-of-the-spear when it comes to disasters.

I know when Hurricane Michael ravaged my hometown, we had 1,800 law enforcement officers deployed to the area.

And then in Surfside you had several members of the PBA who worked alongside the Miami-Dade police department and our US&R Teams.

In fact, to the officers that worked Surfside – go ahead and stand up so we can give you a round of applause! God bless you all, you can sit down.

A lot of folks don't know this, but the entire area was a crime scene, so everything that went in-and-out was the responsibility of Miami PD.

That department also had to the tough job of notifying the family members of the 98 lost souls that their loved one had been identified in the rubble.

Outside of catching the bad guys, the work law enforcement does in building relationships in our neighborhoods is important. For those that know me, I'm big into relationships, and people.

Florida's law enforcement community builds stronger communities, and that's because of the bonds you build.

I don't care where I am or what I'm doing, if I see a police officer I feel better, I feel safer, and if you need help – they are there to help.

In fact, if I'm with my boys, I make Theo and Johnny go up to an officer and shake their hand and thank them for their service.

I know from personal experience how police make things safer and allow businesses to prosper.

My father – (God rest his soul) – was robbed in 1972.

From that point, on we made sure we had a sheriff's deputy at the restaurant.

The fact is when you've got 600 people waiting for a seat, you'll get a few customers with too much "vacation" in them.

That's a nice way of saying good people will sometimes do stupid things.

One night we had an 18 year old come in from Dothan, and after the meal he skipped out on the bill.

Well, we had the deputy there, and we got him.

The deputy said, "Son I don't get it, you came to one of the biggest restaurants in Bay County.

"You know what y'all have to spend, but you don't have the money. What were you thinking?"

And the young man, stoned in the face, said "Respectfully sir this wouldn't have worked at McDonalds."

That was a big moment for how I see the world.

The only reason this guy skipped-out-on the bill, was because he thought could get away with it.

Sometimes crime is no more complicated than that.

Sometimes, folks are willing to roll the dice on whether they'll get caught or not.

Unfortunately, there are too many people out there who try to overcomplicate things.

They argue that police make problems worse and not better.

BRIDGE FOR THE BADGE

I don't want to sugar coat it, but it's a tough time to be in law enforcement.

I know that the past few years have been hard on everyone, but it has been especially difficult for our law enforcement community.

According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, there's been a 10% increase in officer deaths compared to this time last year.

Between Covid, the BLM riots, the lock downs, the men and women in uniform have faced a lot.

You had blue states that shut down businesses, and when people rioted, they blamed police.

To add salt on the wound, politicians told the police to stand down.

So while the national media said protests were "mostly peaceful," American cities burned and some police departments weren't even allowed to do their jobs because of "bad optics".

You also had police responding to 911 calls, and many of these heroes contracted Covid and died.

So far this year we've already had 71 officers nationwide who have fallen to this terrible virus.

If that wasn't enough, now you've got police being fired because of these mandates.

Look, I'm no doctor Fauci, but can someone explain to me why threatening an officer's health care benefits - over not getting the job - is good for public health?

Thank God for leaders like Governor Ron DeSantis who said enough-is-enough when it comes to mandates.

In fact, join me in giving the Governor a round of applause for his call-to-action in setting up a special session banning mandates in Florida!

Look, I got the vaccine, but I don't believe in mandates.

I think if you want to get more folks vaccinated, let's put the vinegar away, and try the sugar instead.

Let's start with time off or bonuses.

Why would you treat men-and-women who are trained to fight – like children? Of course they're going to push back.

We've got too many "experts" and "pundits" and politicians who think our law enforcement community can't make adult decisions. It irritates me to no end.

To me – if you earned the right to wear that badge – none of us have a right to tell you what goes into your body. That's between you, your family, and your God.

Now that being said, there is an opportunity for the Florida Legislature to make our officers and their families a little more comfortable as they deal with Covid.

I know that when Covid was hitting Florida the hardest, I issued a directive covering state first responders for workers comp.

But, I know that at the end of the day, workers comp claims just don't cover all the bills.

That's why I think this session, the Legislature should seriously consider covering the lost-pay of law enforcement officers who were hospitalized as a result of Covid.

I like the bonuses the Governor did for first responders, I like the incentives to bring officers to Florida from out-of-state, but let's see if we can do a little more for those that impacted by COVID-19.

To me this would be a "Bridge-for-the-Badge" something that would provide a monetary "Bridge" to families of law enforcement as their loved one dealt with Covid.

To be in law enforcement means you have to engage with the public, and that puts you at a greater risk for contracting the disease.

I think Governor DeSantis nailed it when he said, "You just can't respond to an emergency over Zoom."

I am about as tight with the State of Florida's purse strings as it gets, but the state's coffers are filled to the brim, and I can't imagine a better use of some of these funds.

It would also help Florida double-down on its commitment to law enforcement – especially as some of these other cities and states are implementing mandates.

I can assure everyone it won't break the piggy-bank – because trust me – I'm the state's Chief Financial Officer. The bank is literally in my office!

FIGHTING ANTI POLICE CULTURE

The more I think about it, the more I think these vaccine mandates are just a continuation of the anti-police movement we saw in 2020

It's liberal politicians, and unelected bureaucrats, exerting control over a population of people they just don't like.

Let's not be academic about all of this: more people are dying because this anti-police movement.

We've already seen homicide rates increase nationally by 30% in 2020.

Already this year, law-enforcement fatalities related to firearms are up 4 percent.

People who back "Defund the Police," don't like you, because you enforce our laws.

And because we're a nation of laws – they don't like America.

The anti-police movement doesn't like you because you are stopping them from burning down our country.

And thank God you're in their way!

So where did all of this nonsense come from?

We paid for it when we sent our sons and daughters to schools where they're taught that merit is fake and that America was founded on oppression.

I am to the point where I'm getting fed up with how the humanities departments at colleges are turning into closed-minded hate factories.

I think our colleges are making a lot of thinkers, and those thinkers are spinning their wheels trying to rebuild society instead of figuring out ways to help people.

Professors, and people with a lot of letters behind their names, are teaching people how to break things instead of how to build them.

I'm getting to the point where I want to defund humanities departments that are fueling division and hate.

Look, you can teach people to hate America all you want, but you're not doing it with my tax money.

You need to go setup your own lemonade stand if you want to do that.

Thank God for normal people.

While people on twitter may fight about politics, normal people have got to drop their kids off at school.

They've got to make sure they pack a lunch and iron their clothes.

On top of all that, they've got to go to work, because people are counting on them.

It's this group where common sense lives.

It's this group of people – the normal people – who want more police. Not less police.

They want more police, because with more police they feel safer, and there's less of a chance that they're going to get robbed or murdered.

This isn't complicated stuff.

It's no different than that kid from Dothan who tried skip out on his check because he didn't want to pay for a nice meal.

Look there are two groups of people who want less police...

One are the criminals who make a living from crime.

The drug dealers, the robbers, the rapists, the murders – they want less police because they don't want to go to jail.

The second group are privileged people who think they're smarter than the rest of us.

Frankly, they don't like this country.

These are politicians, corporate HR directors, Hollywood executives, university administrators, liberal-columnists and professors.

They have made a cottage industry of selling the notion that police are to blame for bad things that happen in people's lives.

This group of people believe that crime is just a natural-response to a bad country.

These folks believe that people should be allowed to steal, because it's not about the \$119 sneakers; it's a political act against free markets.

That's why we've seen CVS and Walgreens closing down certain locations, because no one is enforcing basic laws against theft.

The elite have worked overtime to destroy normal ideas, like free will and self-responsibility. It's how they sell books; it's how they get paid.

There's a BIG difference, however, between criminals and the privileged.

When the riots of 2020 were destroying small businesses with tight margins, the rich, the powerful and the national media could not have cared less.

They just don't care about small businesses in bad neighborhoods. It burns me up.

The rich and powerful get the benefit of having their cake and eating it too.

They go on MSNBC and say "defund the police," then drive back to their million dollar house in their gated community.

Or they just get security only for themselves.

Just ask the City Council of Los Angeles who defunded the police, but got their own private security.

Speaking of the rich elite, did anyone see John Oliver's piece on HBO where he ranted that unvaccinated cops and I quote: "Don't care about public safety"?

This may shock everyone here, but John Oliver doesn't live in a bad neighborhood.

No, John Oliver lives in a \$10 million condo, in the upper west side of New York.

I'll tell you – I believe in hard work, I believe in the lord above.

But the fact that someone as unfunny, and mean-spirited, as John Oliver has \$10 million dollars to throw-around makes you wonder whether somethings off.

So who suffers from the John Oliver's of the world?

It's the poor people. It's our broken communities.

It's a sad reality that law enforcement has become the collateral damage as part of a culture war that YOU never asked to be a part of.

FLORIDA LOVES POLICE

But I am proud that the war on police stops at the Florida-Georgia line.

Florida is funding police because we love the police.

We are funding the police because we like going to bed without feeling like we're going to be robbed.

We're funding the police because it's hard for a tourist economy to work when angry mobs can run around unchecked.

We're funding the police because we want our kids to know that if they're in a dangerous situation, they can ask police for help.

And most importantly, we're funding the police because we love this country, and we don't want to lose it.

So, God bless you,

God Bless your families,

And God Bless the PBA for everything they do for our heroes.

Sincerely,



*Jimmy Patronis
Chief Financial Officer
State of Florida*

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