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*John Rivera*

# A Message From Your President

## Legislative Session

I'm heartbroken to report that wages as the Governor proposed (and we would have wanted) for our state law enforcement, correctional, and correctional probation officers did not get through this year. A measly \$1,000.00 bonus was given across the board to all state employees. Also, the Academy bill has once again eluded us, but not for a lack of trying. We will try again next year but sadly, with each passing year, more affected members are impacted negatively.

We didn't come back empty-handed, though. The PBA successfully passed the FHP separation bill. Additionally, we passed some significant bill of rights enhancements to further ensure fairness during internal affairs investigations.

A debt of gratitude is owed to our many lobbyists who labored tirelessly and to those PBA board members who sacrificed their personal and family time and joined our efforts in Tallahassee. Many don't ever see the anguish experienced by **Executive Director David Murrell** and the rest of the team when bills fall short, especially when it has such an impact on so many folks, but I do and on behalf of everyone, thanks for what you do. The team is as follows: **Deputy Executive Director Matt Puckett, Ernie George, Ed Hoffman, Jim Spearing, Ken Kopczynski, Don Teems, Ed Collins, and Gary Bradford.**

Also, a notable mention goes out to **Jacksonville FOP President Nelson Cuba.** We worked alongside with him and **FOP lobbyist Lisa Henning,** of Dave Ericks and Associates, better than any previous year. As a result of our collaborative efforts, meaningful protections for our profession were obtained—which is certain to have a long lasting effect. Again, thank you to all.

## Legal Staff

We have added one new additional attorney to our legal staff in Tallahassee in order to continue serving our members with the utmost service. I remain committed to maintaining

the most effective and lethal legal unit in the State of Florida. No other union, association or affiliation has as many, or as qualified, attorneys representing the rights of the communities' bravest.

We must combat abusive administrators with every possible avenue we have, including but not limited to legal actions. There is no doubt that the PBA has and will continue to leave a mark on case law that will benefit all for years to come.

## Inferior organizations

Recently, I was made aware of information displayed by other groups who claim to represent law enforcement. I was amused about the crap printed and the dishonesty regarding the passage of laws, benefits and wages. On one website, a comparison is done, and they falsely take credit for things they had no involvement in. But, there is no regulation on these falsehoods; thus, they use these phony claims to attempt to lure folks away from whatever organization they currently belong to. Suffice it to say it was pure garbage and lies. While certainly amusing to me, what does make it sad is that some folks are not smart enough to see it and fall prey to it. Oftentimes, only when it is too late do folks come to their senses and want back into the best choice. So, don't be fooled.

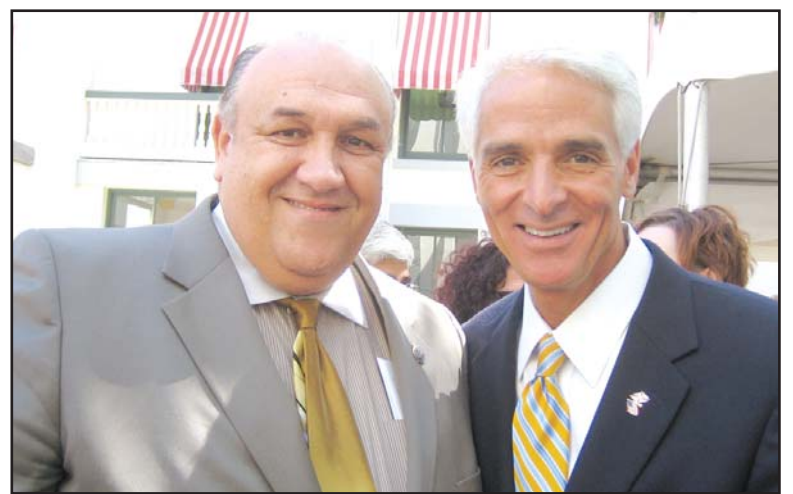
To make it clear, there is no law enforcement organization that has passed more laws than the PBA. The PBA has the best record when it comes to obtaining salary, benefits and job protection—period! But we prove ourselves through action and not empty words.

Let me leave you with this response: Generally speaking, those who cry and complain the loudest are most likely the least involved and informed.

Until next issue...



The Tallahassee Holiday Inn shows its appreciation for having John Rivera and fellow PBA officers stay with them during the recent legislative session.



Florida PBA President John Rivera with Governor Charlie Crist at the Capitol.



John Rivera discusses Bill of Rights issues with Representatives Will Snyder (left) and Nick Thompson (2nd from left).