

Scruggs, Maria

From: Jack Parker [jack.parker@bcso.us]
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2010 6:10 PM
To: Kendall Moore
Cc: Scruggs, Maria
Subject: Please Distribute to all of the CRC Members

To the members of the Charter Review Commission,

Previously, I had written to you asking that you not vote in favor of creating another bureaucracy by creating a Comptroller to duplicate auditing responsibilities that are already being done. If there is a desire to create more government jobs and spend more money, I would rather the county spend it on funding some of 75 deputy sheriffs we are short of meeting the minimum staffing requirement of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

This time, I am writing you to request that you soundly reject the concept to abolish the Constitutional Officers and replace them with less effective, charter officers. The Florida Constitution outlined the separation of powers and created different Constitutional Officers and Constitutional Offices for a reason. It provides a checks and balances that guarantees that no single entity possesses all of the power and control.

It is important that the Office of Sheriff remain independent, strong and free from the political influences that could have a negative influence on important public safety matters. As an example, Sheriff's are in a position to be very honest with the public about public safety issues. They do not work for the Board nor are they subordinate to the Board. As a result, they are free to do what is best for the citizens. In other words, they can do what they were elected by the people to do. You cannot reduce the authority of the Constitutional Officer, without also reducing the authority of the citizen. The citizens are empowered by the fact they can elect their own constitutional officers and truly impact the direction of that elective office.

It is conceivable that a charter Sheriff could be prevented by some future Board from enforcing certain laws or speaking up about specific deficiencies that threatens public safety. It is also conceivable that a charter Property Appraiser could be quietly influenced to raise property values to create more tax revenue. We need to maintain a healthy separation from the Board of County Commissioners as intended by the Constitution.

With so many needs in our community, why do we feel compelled to fix what is not broken?

I would respectfully ask each member to support the Office of Sheriff by voting no on the charter officer initiative.

Respectfully,

Sheriff Jack Parker