



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

May 14, 2018

Commissioner Rick Swearingen  
Florida Department of Law Enforcement  
2331 Phillips Road  
Tallahassee, FL 32308

Dear Commissioner Swearingen:

It has come to my attention that data critical to the integrity of Florida's firearm background screenings was not consistently being entered by Florida's independently elected Clerks of Court into our state and federal databases in a timely manner. This is unacceptable. It is critical that at all levels of government, agencies work together to ensure the safety of our families and communities.

In Florida, we are at a 46-year low in crime thanks to the hard work of law enforcement and we must continue to work to keep firearms out of the hands of the mentally ill and those who are a danger to themselves or others. As you know, following the tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, I worked with the Florida Legislature and fought tirelessly to pass comprehensive legislation that addresses mental health and school security so a tragedy like the Parkland shooting never happens again.

It is my understanding that today, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement continued its work that you have done for many years and requested the FY18 NICS Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP) and National Criminal History Record Improvement Program (NCHIP) grants. I applaud FDLE for your continued work to keep Floridians safe and provide even more assistance to the Clerks on this important issue.

Today, I am requesting that we go even further and amend your grant application to the Department of Justice, increasing the requested funding from nearly \$95,000 to \$1 million to expand the pilot program beyond Miami Dade County to locations in 10-12 counties. It is so important that we are doing everything possible to keep law enforcement informed and families safe, and these additional positions should be in jurisdictions ranging from large urban areas to rural areas, including those with the highest rates of crime, and those impacted by limited data availability due to the record submission issues I have noted here.

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I ask that you immediately begin working with State Attorney's Offices and Clerks of Court to identify those counties and circuits that would most benefit from these pilot programs to improve submission of these critical records to FDLE or the Mental Health Competency (MECOM) repository.

Again, I want to thank you and the many hardworking men and women at FDLE for everything you do every single day as you put your safety and wellbeing on the line in service to others. Please let me know if there is anything my office can do to be helpful in this process. I look forward to seeing a fast response from the U.S. Department of Justice and putting this plan to work quickly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Scott  
Governor