

3 April 2019

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Governor of Florida  
400 S Monroe St  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

Congratulations on your appointment of Dr. Scott Rivkees as Surgeon General for the state of Florida.

Dr. Rivkees and I met in December 2014, when I was incoming Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) serving Gainesville and Alachua County. At that time, the CAC and the University of Florida Child Protection Team (CPT), which Dr. Rivkees oversaw, were embroiled in a longstanding and, quite frankly, ugly conflict regarding our respective organizations' roles in the identification, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse and neglect in our community. Dr. Rivkees and I pledged to each other to set aside our organizations' past differences and work toward a mutually beneficial solution that focused on the best possible outcomes for the children and families we served.

Over the next four years, Dr. Rivkees and I disagreed often, but I found in Dr. Rivkees a worthy adversary, trusted friend, and fierce ally in our shared mission to break the cycle of child abuse in our community and beyond. Dr. Rivkees is an exceptional negotiator and polished statesman, tenacious but patient, and enviably well prepared for every issue on the table. He went to great lengths and worked tirelessly to accommodate the CAC's needs as we pursued a shared goal of co-locating the CAC and CPT.

On November 15, 2018, the CAC and CPT took part in a joint event celebrating successful co-location of the CAC and CPT, a feat which many felt was improbable, if not impossible. It was a very proud moment for all of us, but I can happily concede that it would not have been possible without Dr. Rivkees' tremendous leadership and resolve.

Again, I commend you on Dr. Scott Rivkees' appointment. I strongly believe he has every quality befitting the position, and I look forward to what I trust will be many accomplishments during his tenure as Surgeon General for the great state of Florida.

Very truly yours,



Lem Purcell  
Past Chairman  
Child Advocacy Center, Inc.  
Gainesville, Florida