

As elected law enforcement officers, we must uphold our oaths of office and protect the legal residents of our jurisdictions. While we are committed to upholding the law and maintaining public safety, the federal government has failed in its responsibilities to secure our nation's borders. During the 2022 Fiscal Year, encounters at the Southwest Border hit record numbers, and encounters in Fiscal Year 2023 are nearly twenty percent higher than in 2022. The consequences of the federal government's abdication are being felt across the nation. Cartels and gang members are bringing record levels of

fentanyl and other drugs into our communities as our officers work around the clock to battle these criminal institutions. As Sheriffs, we are thankful that Florida has recognized the crisis at our border and we are partnering with the Sunshine State to bring law and order back to our streets.

Under the leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis, Florida has recognized how the porous border has had far-reaching impacts and has stepped in to support public safety. This includes creating a nation-leading human smuggling and drug trafficking strike force in partnership with local sheriffs, lending physical support by deploying members of their national guard, highway patrol and state law enforcement to the border, and enacting a program to voluntarily transport illegal immigrants to so-called sanctuary jurisdictions across the United States. It is unfortunate that the federal government has effectively abandoned border states and forced states like Florida to deal with this burden on their own. We can no longer sit by and watch our nation become overrun by gang activity and drug-related violence.

While we have been urging the federal government to step up their efforts to secure our border, or at the very least help us deal with the impacts of the border crisis, these pleas have fallen on the deaf ears of an administration that is purposefully unwilling to enforce our nation's immigration laws. The undersigned Sheriffs join together to partner with Governor DeSantis and the state of Florida to preserve the safety and well-being of the citizens we serve.

We call on other law enforcement agencies to do the same.

Signed,

Sheriff Robert D. Schultz, III, *Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office (Florida)* 

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Sheriff Bill Leeper, Nassau County Sheriff's Office (Florida)

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Sheriff Michael J. Chitwood, Volusia County Sheriff's Office (Florida)

Sheriff Gordon Smith, Bradford County Sheriff's Office (Florida)

Sheriff David Harper, *Madison County* Sheriff's Office (Florida)

Sheriff A.J. "Tony" Smith, *Franklin County Sheriff's Office (Florida)* 



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Sheriff Bill Prummell, Charlotte County Sheriff's Office (Florida)



Sheriff Paul Blackman, *Highlands County Sheriff's Office (Florida)* 

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Sheriff T.K. Waters, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (Florida)

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Sheriff Allen Cooper, Fremont County Sheriff's Office (Colorado)

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Sheriff Eddie Farris, *Putnam County Sheriff's Office (Tennessee)* 

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Sheriff Tyler Appel, Roberts County Sheriff's Office (South Dakota)

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt, Dodge County Sheriff's Office (Wisconsin)

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Sheriff Grady Judd, Polk County Sheriff's Office (Florida)

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Sheriff Rick Wells, *Manatee County* Sheriff's Office (Florida)

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Sheriff Michael C. Bonham, Osage County Sheriff's Office (Missouri)

Sheriff Robert S. Leahy, *Clermont County Sheriff's Office (Ohio)* 

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Sheriff Dennis Banther, *Kingfisher County (Oklahoma)* 

Sheriff Buddy Money, *Liberty County Sheriff's Office (Florida)* 

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Sheriff Morris A. Young, *Gadsden County Sheriff's Office (Florida)* 

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