

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 23-197

(State Attorney Executive Assignment)

WHEREAS, the Honorable ANDREW A. BAIN, State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida, has advised Governor RON DESANTIS that allegations have been made against Jeffrey Ashton for lewd and lascivious molestation on a child under 16 and failure to report child abuse; Rita Ashton for failure to report child abuse; and, David Ashton for lewd conduct on a child under 16; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable ANDREW A. BAIN has also advised the Governor that Jeffrey Ashton is a current circuit court judge for the Ninth Circuit and the former state attorney; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable ANDREW A. BAIN, to avoid a conflict of interest or any appearance of impropriety, has voluntarily disqualified himself and has requested the executive assignment of another State Attorney regarding the investigation and prosecution of this case and all related matters regarding Justin Hill; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable BRIAN HAAS, State Attorney for the Tenth Judicial Circuit of Florida, has agreed to accept an executive assignment in this matter; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the State of Florida and of the ends of justice that the Honorable BRIAN HAAS discharge the duties of the Honorable ANDREW A. BAIN, pursuant to section 27.14, Florida Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS, Governor of Florida, in obedience to my solemn constitutional duty to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed," and pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, issue the following Executive Order, effective immediately:

Section 1. The Honorable BRIAN HAAS, State Attorney for the Tenth Judicial Circuit of Florida, referred to as the “Assigned State Attorney,” is assigned to discharge the duties of the Honorable ANDREW A. BAIN, State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida, regarding the investigation and prosecution of this case and all related matters regarding Jeffrey Ashton, Rita Ashton, and David Ashton.

Section 2. The Assigned State Attorney or one or more Assistant State Attorneys and Investigators, who have been designated by the Assigned State Attorney, shall proceed immediately to the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida, and are vested with the authority to perform the duties prescribed herein.

Section 3. All residents of the Ninth Judicial Circuit are requested, and all public officials are directed, to cooperate and render whatever assistance is necessary to the Assigned State Attorney, so that justice may be served.

Section 4. The period of this Executive Assignment shall be for one (1) year, to and including October 11, 2024.

Section 5. The Assigned State Attorney shall notify the Governor on or before September 11, 2024, if additional time is required.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, this 11th day of October, 2023.



RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:



SECRETARY OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FL

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FILED