

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 18-84

WHEREAS, the Honorable PHIL ARCHER, State Attorney for the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida, has advised Governor RICK SCOTT that James Cotton is under investigation for lewd and lascivious conduct; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable PHIL ARCHER has also advised the Governor that James Cotton is the son-in-law of an employee of the state attorney's office, and the employee is a potential witness; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable PHIL ARCHER, 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 with respect to the investigation and prosecution of this case and all related matters; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable ARAMIS D. AYALA, State Attorney for the Ninth 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 ARAMIS D. AYALA discharge the duties of the Honorable PHIL ARCHER, pursuant to section 27.14, Florida Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICK SCOTT, 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 ARAMIS D. AYALA, State Attorney for the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida, referred to as the “Assigned State Attorney,” is assigned to discharge the duties of the Honorable PHIL ARCHER, State Attorney for the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida, as they relate to the investigation, prosecution, and all matters related to James Cotton.

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 Eighteenth Judicial Circuit of Florida, and are vested with the authority to perform the duties prescribed herein.

Section 3.

All residents of the Eighteenth 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 April 5, 2019.

Section 5.

The Assigned State Attorney shall notify the Governor on or before March 5, 2019, 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 5th day of April, 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Scott', is written over a horizontal line.

RICK SCOTT, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Ritzman', is written over a horizontal line.

SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED
2018 APR -5 PM 3:30
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA