

August 6th, 2009

Editor,

The Fraternal Order of Police has a long history of supporting the men and women who serve the citizens of this great nation. Our local FOP is only a small portion of dedicated men and woman whose job is to put on a gun and badge and head towards the violence -- not away. They chose this honorable profession for many reasons; however to serve and protect is on the forefront.

Pasco County Commissioners have sought your input for this budget process, a commendable effort on their part. The citizens of Pasco County answered overwhelmingly: To support the public's safety.

On behalf of the FOP, we urge the citizens to reach out to the Commissioners in support of the men and women of the Sheriff's Office and Fire Department. The Federal Government has awarded Pasco County with 24 deputies, paid for over the next three years before the Commissioners have to consider further payment. This additional staffing placed on the road will provide much needed manpower to help address the ever increasing crime and calls for service Pasco is experiencing.

The uncertainty of the financial makeup of Pasco County in the next four years should not be a deciding factor on whether or not to accept this award. There are many factors which must be weighed, however the safety of the citizens of Pasco County should be number one.

In addition, Pasco citizens and fellow public safety members cannot afford to loose any front line public safety members, especially not 48 firemen and paramedics. Everyone is encouraged to reach out to your Commissioners and demand such vital protection for all our loved ones.

It is certain the budget is complex. However it is also certain funding is available for public safety. The FOP believes in the Board of County Commissioners and believes they will make the correct decisions in balancing the need for public safety and the other important aspects of the budget they are forced to deal with this year.

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