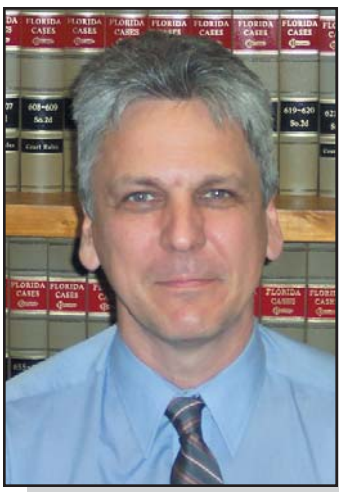


Privatization Issues In The News



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PBA Members Kill Proposed Privatization of Public Prison

During this recently past legislative session, a proposal was floated by the Senate during a Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations Conference Committee meeting to privatize the publically built and run Suwannee Correctional Facility and Annex.

As soon as this proposal was made public, your PBA went into a full-court press. First, we told the Senate committee members that this proposal was unacceptable. Then we lobbied the House appropriations committee members to not accept the Senate proposal.

The way the appropriations process works is that both the Senate and the House come up with their own version of the budget. Then both chambers form conference committees to work out the differences in the two budget proposals.

These conference committees bounce offers back and forth until most, if not all of the differences are worked out. If any issue cannot be worked out at the conference committee level, then that issue is "bumped" to the conference committee chairs.

If the conference chairs cannot work out the differences, then those issues are bumped to the Senate and the House appropriations chairs to work out the differences. If these

chairs cannot work out the differences, then those issues are bumped to the Senate president and the House speaker.

We were assured by the House members that they were not supportive of the privatization of Suwannee.

The PBA then heard it was possible that a facility in the Dade County area might be privatized instead of Suwannee. So that's when we opened up our legislative connection to our members in the Dade and Suwannee County areas.

Our membership came alive with hundreds of calls targeting legislative leaders. Also, **DC Secretary Walt McNeil** weighed in against the proposal to privatize Suwannee.

It was through the calls PBA members made and the work by your PBA lobbyists, plus timely support from firm House members, DOC and Governor Crist, that this bad proposal was killed.

The lesson here is that without your PBA representatives at the Capitol everyday of the session your jobs could be gone like that. Also, it is when our membership flexes their combined muscle that we can do anything.

Keep that in mind the next time the PBA calls on your assistance. ●

Get aboard the PCI-Watch

If you are serious about fighting the for-profit private prison industry, then you need to sign-up for the PCI's Watch — the electronic private prison news service. Just send your request to kenk@PrivateCI.org and ask to be put on the list. Please be aware — this is not for the faint-at-heart. Sometimes there is a lot of reading but it is well worth it.

Webpage

The Private Corrections Institute maintains an excellent webpage on the for-profit private prison industry. You can get recent news, lawsuits, reports, and links to other sites. Our "Hall of Shame" is a hit among activists.

The link is:

www.PrivateCI.org

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