



For Immediate Release
January 24, 2014

Contact: Beth Watson
(407) 421-0469
bwatson@sachsmedia.com

Experts, Policy Leaders and Providers to Discuss Criminal Justice in Florida at Justice Summit 2014

Attorney General Pam Bondi to Speak

ORLANDO, Fla. – Florida's continued efforts toward a smarter, more affordable approach to criminal justice issues will be reviewed next week when state and national leaders convene in Orlando for the 2014 Justice Summit. Among those gathering to discuss criminal justice policy will be Edward Latessa, PhD, University of Cincinnati School of Criminal Justice; Mark Levin, Esq., of the Texas Public Policy Foundation; and Sarah Rumpf, Esq., Right on Crime.

Florida's 37th Attorney General, Pam Bondi, will be the Summit's featured speaker during the opening session. Elected in 2010, some of her top priorities are strengthening penalties to stop pill mills, mortgage and Medicaid fraud, and awareness of the horrific crime of human trafficking. Also scheduled to speak is Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd, who also serves as the president of the Florida Sheriffs Association.

More than 100 experts, ranging from policy makers and elected officials to leading service providers, are expected to attend the 3rd Annual Summit, which begins on Monday, January 27, and adjourns on Wednesday, January 29. The Summit is hosted by the Florida Smart Justice Alliance, a coalition of organizations committed to changes in Florida's criminal justice and corrections system designed to make Florida's communities safer, save taxpayer money and hold offenders accountable while providing the tools for them to live law-abiding lives.

"We know that crime is down – yet Florida's prison population continues to grow at an ever increasing cost to taxpayers, but without treating the inmates' underlying issues of substance abuse, mental illness, and lack of education, our efforts will not effectively reduce recidivism. At the Summit we will hear from many of the foremost thought leaders on criminal justice who are knowledgeable in smart, reasonable and evidence-based policy initiatives that enhance public safety yet ensure offender accountability," said Barney Bishop, president and CEO of the Florida Smart Justice Alliance.

-MORE-

Among the highlights of the Summit will be:

- A panel discussion with law enforcement and the legal community – including Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings and Chief Judge Belvin Perry – on key criminal justice policy issues in Florida
- An in-depth look at alternatives to incarceration for individuals with mental illness
- An analysis of the efficacy of electronic monitoring, and how it can foster accountability
- A review of juvenile justice issues including specialized programming that meets specific needs of underage offenders
- Updates on successful programming in Florida including adult civil citation pilot program in Tallahassee and a very successful reentry program by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
- A legislative panel discussion featuring the chairmen of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee and House Judiciary Committee and other prominent members of the legislature
- An overview of "Fast Facts" that will provide policy makers with the information they need to continue to advocate for programs that will reduce recidivism

Summit attendees cover the spectrum of stakeholders in Florida's adult and juvenile justice systems. Registrants include judges, sheriffs, prosecutors, public defenders, business organizations, labor unions, civil rights organizations, prison ministries, probation officials, court administrators and more.

"Summit attendees come from all across the adult and juvenile justice system yet we will all work as one, united by our shared belief that Florida must try a new evidence-based approach with policies that have proven track records so we can spare future crime victims," said Lori Costantino-Brown, founding chair of the Florida Smart Justice Alliance and President and CEO of Bridges of America, the leading provider of transition and work release programs in Florida.

The agenda for Justice Summit 2014 is available online at www.justicesummit.org. For more information on the Florida Smart Justice Alliance, go to www.smartjusticealliance.org.

MEDIA NOTE: Members of the news media who wish to cover the Justice Summit do not have to register to attend the event. For more information or to make arrangements to attend, please contact Beth Watson at (407) 421-0469 or bwatson@sachsmedia.com.

#