

MARCH 10, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!! THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER PROGRAM IS IN JEOPARDY. SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE PROGRAM, THE OFFICERS HAVE DILIGENTLY AND PROFESSIONALLY APPLIED THEMSELVES AND HAVE BECOME AN INVALUABLE PROGRAM TO THE FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL ALONG WITH THE PINELLAS, HILLSBOROUGH, PASCO AND ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITIES. RESPONSE TIME TO TRAFFIC CRASHES, DISABLED VEHICLES AND OTHER CALLS FOR SERVICE HAVE DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. MOST IMPORTANTLY, ROAD OBSTRUCTIONS CAUSED BY TRAFFIC CRASHES ARE EXPEDITIOUSLY CLEARED ALLOWING THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC TO BE RESTORED, MINIMIZING TRAFFIC TIE-UPS. THE PROGRAM BEGAN IN PINELLAS AND HILLS AND EXPANDED TO PASCO AND ORANGE COUNTIES BECAUSE IT WAS A SUCCESS.

STATISTICALLY, THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS INVESTIGATED APPROXIMATELY 60 % OF THE CRASHES IN PINELLAS COUNTY FOR 2009. THIS IS QUITE SIGNIFICANT, FOR THE OFFICERS ACCOUNT FOR APPROXIMATELY 29 % OF THE TOTAL MAN HOURS WORKED. 8 CSO'S ACCOUNT FOR 22 % OF THE FHP WORK FORCE IN PINELLAS FOR 2009. STATE TROOPERS WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CRASHES AND THE LOSS OF THE PROGRAM WILL HAVE A TRMENDOUS IMPACT TO THE COMMUNITY AND AFFECT THE LOCAL FIRE DEPTS, SHERIFF'S OFFICE, SUNSTAR, TOW COMPANIES, ETC. THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE RESIDING IN FLORIDA AND VEHICLES ON THE ROADWAYS. WITHOUT THE CSO'S, CRASH VICTIMS WOULD WAIT, SOMETIMES FOR HOURS, FOR SOMEONE TO RESPOND TO THEIR CALL FOR HELP.

WE STRONGLY SEEK YOUR SUPPORT. SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY, THE TAXPAYERS, THE VOTERS SHOULD NOT BE SACRIFICED BUT SHOULD BE PROVIDED AT ALL COSTS. I CERTAINLY WOULD NOT WANT TO BE A VICTIM AND BE STRANDED ON THE SIDE OF THE ROADWAY, WAITING, AND WONDERING IF SOMEONE WAS ON THEIR WAY TO RESPOND AND ASSIST IN MY CALL FOR HELP. I'M SURE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY MEMBER WOULD NOT WANT TO BE IN THAT KIND OF PREDICAMENT.

IF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER POSITIONS WILL BE ELIMINATED DUE TO BUDGET CUTS, THE PROGRAM WILL BE TERMINATED AS OF SEPT, 2010 POSSIBLY SOONER IN JUNE, THE END OF THE BUDGET YEAR. WE ALMOST LOST IT IN 2001, WE FOUGHT AND SURVIVED UP UNTIL NOW.

PLEASE SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM BY SIGNING BELOW IN THE SPACES PROVIDED.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT.

SINCERELY,

PINELLAS, HILLSBOROUGH, PASCO AND ORANGE COUNTIES
COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS

TO: FLORIDA SENATORS AND LEGISLATORS

THE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICERS HAVE PROVIDED A VERY MUCH NEEDED SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY. I STONGLY SUPPORT THE PROGRAM AND URGE THE SENATORS, LEGISLATORS AND WHOEVER IS INVOLVED IN TALLAHASSEE, TO SUPPORT AND VOTE TO INCLUDE THE PROGRAM IN THE BUDGET.

SIGNATURE: _____

ADDRESS: _____
