



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 19 2015

DAVE WILSON, CHAIRMAN

Senior Editor/Administration
The Miami Herald

BOB SHAW, VICE CHAIRMAN

Retired Editor

**MIKE VASILINDA, SECRETARY
& TREASURER**

President

Capitol News Service

JON KANEY, GENERAL COUNSEL

Kaney & Olivari

DAN AUTREY

Publisher & President

Tampa Bay Newspapers

DICK BATCHELOR

Founder and President

Dick Batchelor Management Group, Inc.

BRIAN CROWLEY

Principal

Immediacy Public Relations

MIKE DEESON

Senior Reporter

WTSP-TV

FRANK DENTON

Editor

Florida Times-Union

CAROL JEAN LOCICERO

Thomas & LoCicero

SAMUEL MORLEY

General Counsel

Florida Press Association

TIM NICKENS

Editor of Editorials

Tampa Bay Times

ROSEMARY O'HARA

Editorial Page Editor

SunSentinel

PATSY PALMER

D'Alemberte & Palmer, PLLC

PATRICK RICE

Editor

Daytona Beach News-Journal

DEAN RIDINGS

President & CEO

Intersect Media Solutions

APRIL SALTER

President & Chief Operating Officer

Salter Mitchell

CRAIG SANDLER

General Manager

Affiliated News Services

PETE WEITZEL

Director Emeritus

**AN OPEN LETTER TO GOVERNOR SCOTT
AND
THE MEMBERS OF FLORIDA'S CABINET**

We are writing today to express our deep concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the firing of former FDLE Commissioner Gerald Bailey and the hiring of his replacement, Rick Swearingen. There is intense public interest regarding this matter and we think it imperative that an independent investigation be conducted to address the serious constitutional issues related to Mr. Bailey's departure. The continuing controversy erodes public trust and confidence in the highest levels of our government. Additionally, the controversy and ensuing media coverage calls into question Florida's well-deserved reputation as having the most progressive open government laws in the nation.

State Attorney Willie Meggs has repeatedly stated his disinterest in conducting an investigation. Thus, we respectfully request that Mr. Meggs be asked to step aside so that a special prosecutor can be appointed to conduct a full and impartial investigation into the circumstances surrounding Mr. Bailey's departure.

Public confidence must be restored and our reputation as the Sunshine State protected.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President
Florida's First Amendment Foundation