

PRESS RELEASE

From: John R. Powell, Candidate for Sheriff, Escambia County, Florida

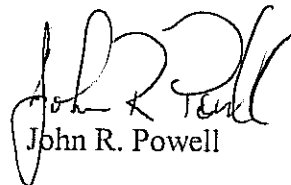
Date: July 30, 2012

Subject: Grand Jury

Today the Grand Jury returned a one count indictment for a misdemeanor charge of accepting a cash or cashier's check contribution over \$50. I am not guilty of these accusations and will plea not guilty and will demand a trial by a jury of my peers. The Grand Jury's role is not to decide guilt and its decision is based upon evidence presented to it solely by the State Attorney's Office. Having dedicated 27 years of my life to the criminal justice system, I respect their role; however, I am confident that a trial jury, after hearing all the evidence, will find that I committed no crime.

Campaigns employ numbers of volunteers who accept contributions for candidates which are then reported to the Supervisor of Elections. It was by my own filings that my opponent made his complaint. In other parts of the state, as well as with local candidates, these issues have been handled through the statutorily recognized process of filing administrative complaints through the Florida Elections Commission. My opponent, to take the focus off the issues, has chosen to make a criminal complaint with the State Attorney's Office to cause embarrassment to me and my supporters even though he admittedly accepted more than \$50 in cash contributions from a number of people. I chose not to file a criminal complaint regarding his campaign because these actions are better addressed in the civil arena not in the criminal courts. Having almost three decades of experience as a certified law enforcement officer, I know the difference between a civil complaint and a crime.

I am continuing my campaign for Sheriff of Escambia County, so we can make our community safe again, address the real issues related to crime in our community, and ensure that all people are treated fairly without prejudice.



John R. Powell