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FJP Statement on FL Governor DeSantis' Power Grab Eroding Local Prosecutorial Autonomy

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) Executive Director Miriam Krinsky issued the following statement today in response to Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' suspension of State Attorney Andrew Warren:

“Governor DeSantis’ suspension of State Attorney Andrew Warren is an unprecedented and dangerous intrusion on the separation of powers and the will of the voters. Since our country’s founding, the independence of the prosecutor – and the autonomy to decide whom and what to charge with inherently limited resources – has been a hallmark of the American criminal legal system.

Governors don’t hand-pick elected prosecutors, the *voters* do. With this outrageous overreach, Gov. DeSantis is sending a clear message that the will of the people of Hillsborough County matters less than his own political agenda.

Prosecutors have a duty to pursue the interests of justice and use their limited resources to investigate and prosecute those crimes that cause the greatest harm to communities. No prosecutor can charge or pursue every violation of the law, and for decades, prosecutors have been making these choices. Only now, when some are seeking to be smarter and focus on the most serious crimes, do we see some politicians launching fear-based attacks on prosecutorial discretion. No one wins when the intensely personal decisions of pregnant women, care by medical providers, or acts of loving parents assisting their transgender children become the focus of the criminal legal system, rather than solving homicides and prosecuting violent crime.

State Attorney Warren was elected and reelected because of his commitment to smart justice and public safety. During his tenure, he has kept young people who pose no risk to the community out of the criminal legal system, prioritized data collection and transparency, and established the county’s first Conviction Integrity Unit to review cases of innocence (indeed, the impactful and important work of that unit would have resulted in the announcement today of a major break in a cold case murder stemming from a CIU exoneration, but for the Governor’s outrageous actions).

Using prosecutorial discretion and not pursuing unjust laws is not neglect of duty but a fierce commitment to justice. We are proud to stand with SA Warren against the governor’s blatant power grab.”

Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).