

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 20, 2023

MEDIA CONTACT

Miriam Krinsky

krinskym@krinsky.la

818-416-5218

FJP Statement on Ruling in Hillsborough County State Attorney’s Lawsuit Against Governor DeSantis

[Fair and Just Prosecution](#) Executive Director Miriam Krinsky issued the following statement in response to today’s [ruling](#) from Florida Northern District Court Judge Robert Hinkle that Florida Governor Ron DeSantis violated Andrew Warren’s First Amendment rights and the Florida Constitution when he suspended the Hillsborough County State Attorney, however the court is unable to grant relief and reinstate Mr. Warren:

“We are incredibly disappointed by the Court’s conclusion that it has no ability to overturn Governor DeSantis’ improper suspension of twice-elected Hillsborough County, Fla. State Attorney Andrew Warren. Allowing the tyrannical whims of a governor to overrule the will of the people sets a dangerous precedent that is befitting an authoritarian regime, not a democracy.

The decision to remove SA Warren from office was never based on the rule of law but rather on the partisan political agenda of a power-hungry governor. While DeSantis claimed the suspension was based on SA Warren’s blanket non-prosecution policies, the Court definitively found that this ‘allegation was false.... [T]he controlling motivations for the suspension were the interest in bringing down a reform prosecutor—a prosecutor whose performance did not match the Governor’s law-and-order agenda—and the political benefit that would result.’

What SA Warren provided his constituents is something we should expect of all our political leaders. He articulated a vision for addressing the needs of his community and shared honestly and transparently how he planned to use limited resources to further public safety. Unfortunately, this kind of candidness in politicians is all too rare, as evidenced by DeSantis’ own effort to disguise Warren’s removal as anything but the political gamesmanship that it was. And the governor didn’t even have the courage to show up in court and defend his decision.

The people of Florida have a right to expect that their vision of justice and the common sense reforms they embraced in twice electing Andrew Warren will matter and be respected by others, including the state’s governor. But sadly, today’s decision may simply pave the way for Governor DeSantis to remove more elected officials over nothing more than political differences.

We know this is not the last chapter in this fight and commend SA Warren for his ongoing efforts to vindicate the will of the voters, protect the right of free speech and preserve the foundation of our democracy.”

###

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](#).