Florida House of Representatives

Representative Bill Hager

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The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

This month's tragedy in Parkland is something we all hope to never witness. Each day, new details emerge about potential interagency breakdowns and miscommunications. We must utilize all of our resources to ensure that a horrific act such as this never happens again.

In the meantime, you have the power through Florida Statute 112.52 (1) to remove Broward County Sheriff Israel for neglect of duty and incompetence.

Various news outlets have confirmed that the School Resource Officer and three Broward Sheriff Deputies were on campus at the time of the attack and chose to take cover themselves rather than stepping up to protect our students. Not one of these trained officers made an effort to enter the building to protect students and teachers and save lives. It was not until deputies from the Coral Springs Police Department arrived, a Department not under the authority of the BSO, that uniformed officers actually entered the school and took action.

Additionally, it has been reported that there were 23 calls to the Broward Sheriff's Office relating to Nikolas Cruz and his home, as well as 39 visits by Broward Sheriff Deputies.

Sadly, this will not be the first time a review of the Broward Sheriff's Office will be done. After the mass shooting at Fort Lauderdale Airport last year a report from BSO found that BSO failed to create a unified command structure during the emergency, suffered from poor radio communication and set up an insufficient crime scene perimeter, among other faults according to Bob Norman of ABC Local 10.

An investigation by Sheriff Israel into the unfathomable inaction of these deputies will do nothing to bring back the 17 victims. The Sheriff was fully aware of the threat this individual presented to his community and chose to ignore it. Sadly, he was not the only one that ignored it. DCF, Broward County Schools, the FBI and the BSO all had the pieces to put this puzzle together, but failed to communicate. While you do not have authority to remove anyone at the FBI, you do have the authority to remove Sheriff Israel, and I encourage you do to so immediately.

Sincerely,

Bill Hager

Bill Hager
State Representative
House District 89