

County Attorney Candidate Outlines Positions

Written by Hugh Pries
Wednesday, 09 July 2008 02:15

Thank you for considering my request to publish my positions as the Republican candidate for Scott County Attorney. My 30-plus years in practice and 10 years as an Assistant Scott County Attorney prosecuting felony drug cases will guide my actions as county attorney and provide the following to the citizens of Scott County.

Service

I will create an attitude of service to the citizens of this county. The "business as usual" and "it's only a job" attitudes currently in vogue will not be tolerated. As one of the primary bulwarks against criminals, the staff and attorneys must represent Scott County as professionals.

I will require that all attorneys in the office be available 24/7 to the law-enforcement agencies in the county. This policy was standard operating procedure for felony drug prosecutors. My opponent has only now initiated coverage by assistants.

I will provide consistent in-service training to all county law-enforcement and investigative agencies on new laws and trial procedure. This was standard operating procedure more than 12 years ago for felony drug prosecutors. When my opponent became First Assistant Scott County Attorney, the idea died. Now, he is resurrecting it as his own initiative, but only after I recently discussed it with several police chiefs in the area. My idea will go further; I will require that the attorneys also receive training from law-enforcement agencies to learn new investigative techniques and procedures so they can confidently and competently present their cases to Scott County juries.

Because of my experience and knowledge of law enforcement in both Iowa and Illinois, I will institute proactive measures that will improve the flow of information about criminals and their activities to all area law-enforcement agencies. Fleeing from one jurisdiction to another will no longer be a criminal's escape hatch.

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I will make the office truly full-time. While in Iraq, I read with some interest that my opponent took credit for requiring the attorneys of the office to become full-time employees. This idea is more than 20 years old and was proposed then by my opponent's predecessor. There are at least three attorneys in the office today who are not full-time; thus my opponent's claims as published are false.

Standards

I will standardize plea negotiations and sentencing recommendations. No more will the citizens see "church probation" recommendations, which I deem to be unenforceable, if not illegal. These standards will ensure all defendants are treated equally and fairly - no more inconsistent results.

I will set standards of professional ethics and competence for the attorneys and staff to ensure professionalism and competence in the prosecution of criminal/civil cases. No more missed lab-report deadlines resulting in dismissals for drug dealers. No more acquittals because witnesses are not called. No more dismissals or huge reductions of charges because the prosecuting attorney did not feel confident/competent to take the case to trial.

I will ensure that the normal human-resource-management standards of counseling and evaluating staff and attorneys are done timely and fairly. Employees of the office need to know what is expected, how their work performance is measured, and how to correct or improve performance in future. No more EEO problems potentially costing taxpayers thousands of dollars because basic principles of human-resource management are not observed.

Supervision

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As the person on the bottom line, I will supervise and lead to ensure the standards set are not only met but exceeded. Only those things get done that the boss checks, and I have the background and experience to ensure that the checking gets done, benefiting the citizens and punishing the criminals.

Common Sense

From the media accounts of the past six months, the taxpayers are not getting their money's worth. Currently the office budget stands at \$2.3 million annually and soon will go to \$2.4 million. This money needs to be spent on the effective prosecution of criminals and the defense of the county against civil suits - not in pursuing nonsensical civil actions having no impact on the safety and welfare of citizens. While in Iraq, I was responsible for the application of taxpayer money building the Iraqi Army. It was my duty then to safeguard those funds and assets and apply them where they would have the most impact. I will do the same with the Scott County taxpayer's money.

For my background and experience, please access my Web site at (<http://www.pries4ca.com>). Thank you for your time.

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