

**BOARD OF
COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS**



JOSEPH E. SMITH

COMMISSIONER

April 17, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm pleased to write this recommendation on behalf of the Institute of Law and Policy Planning. During the past 2.5 years, our county worked with Dr. Kalmanoff and his staff at ILPP on two projects. The first was a Criminal Justice Assessment and the second was a countywide needs study for our government space.

During each instance, the staff of ILPP proved themselves to be dependable and hardworking. As you may know, it is not easy coming into an organization and placing a mirror in the face of a system that believes it is without blemish. That's where ILPP was so helpful.

The explosive growth within St. Lucie County over the last five years has been staggering for all of our departments, especially our criminal justice system. Our jail was bursting at its seams in light of a \$20 million expansion creating a total of 1374 beds. Dr. Kal and his team came in, and after speaking with all cogs in the wheel, provided us with ideas that would enable us to find a solution.

The Board of County Commissioners understood that additional jail beds were not feasible until all inefficiencies within the current system of justice was reduced and eventually eliminated. Some of the ideas the ILPP team presented that are now in use include: hiring a Criminal Justice Coordinator, developing a pre-trial release program, integrating all criminal justice databases, as well as creating a video courtroom at the jail.

While our jail beds are not empty, we worked within our system to create solutions that would streamline our judicial process while preserving its integrity and maintaining the safety of our residents.

Dr. Kal gave it to us straight. He pulled no punches. He was to the point. And in hindsight, that is EXACTLY how I wanted it. Our county is moving forward on both issues in a time of financial challenges. However, if not for his investigation...I cannot imagine where we would be.

Please feel free to contact my office if I may provide any additional assistance.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph E. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Joseph E. Smith

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