

You asked for some elaboration upon the previous PAJ submittal, and they are herein submitted. The format which I use is from business, in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. Needless to say, should you desire further elaboration, just let me know.

STRENGTHS—far and away the greatest strength of the Project on Accountable Justice is its people. We have been able to assemble a very talented group, at the level of board and director. Simply put, we have expertise which could not be replicated in the marketplace.

Deborrah Brodsky, our director, has decades of experience in public policy in Florida. Her background includes work in the legislature and non-profit arenas. Distinctly, her 13 years at Florida TaxWatch were done from a business orientation. Given the overarching influence of the business community in Florida politics, this perspective is critical, and distinct from most policy analysts.

Our Board members are exceptionally diverse. Sandy D'Alemberte is the former president of the American Bar Association and the American Judicature Society. He was dean of the law school at Florida State University, and was the president of FSU. Richard Doran is the former Republican attorney general of Florida. The presidents of St. Petersburg College, Tallahassee Community College and former president of Florida A&M, the nation's largest historically black university, sit upon our board. Similarly, from our other partner schools we have, Dean David Rasmussen of the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy at FSU whose extensive research on the economics of crime and substance abuse policy was far ahead of its time, and Byron Johnson, head of both the Institute for the Study of Religion and the Institute for Prosocial Behavior at Baylor.

The Board is chaired by your correspondent. My background is uniquely broad and allows peer interactions across an almost impossibly broad range. I have been nearly everything there is to be in the justice system except a felony defendant and a probation officer. My career began as an assistant public defender, then assistant state attorney, then county and circuit judge. I served as Sheriff of Monroe County, running for Lt. Governor as the running-mate of Gov. Bob Martinez. Later I was vice chair of the Republican Party of Florida, and was long-time faculty at the University of Miami Law School. Currently I am actively engaged in prison ministry as an Episcopal priest. I speak with credibility and authority in Florida on matters relating to criminal justice. Furthermore, I have a unique ability to travel back and forth between and in hostile camps. I have sat on the boards of The Florida Bar and the Florida Chamber Foundation, Associated Industries of Florida, 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida TaxWatch and the Florida Audubon Society.

WEAKNESSES—institutional capacity is our greatest weakness. We have talent, and access to more. We have only been at this a short time (our first Board meeting was held on October 22, 2012), but our opportunities have consistently exceeded our structural abilities in capacity. This has left us to have to pass on some opportunities, and to have to run to catch most. This is common to start ups, public or private.

Specific areas where capacity could be increased are as follows.

Hand-to-mouth funding of the director is a distraction. Travel has been seriously limited, including local, state, and national networking opportunities. Additional researchers, one a former Governor's staffer and one a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan, both of whom have collaborated with success in the past, could be added very inexpensively. Next, our public relations efforts have been in-house, and with our collective political experience, well done. But data presentation, in particular, could be enhanced and modernized. Finally, your correspondent has been devoting about 35% of his time to PAJ, but without stipend, and indeed without expenses. The former could be improved, and the latter is unsustainable (i.e., two trips to DC in three weeks last month).

OPPORTUNITIES—these arise out of timing. The emergence of a national dialogue, leaning perilously close to consensus on justice reform is manifest. This discussion is a part of that emergence. Eric Holder and Newt Gingrich, Jim Wallis and Ralph Reed are all saying the same things. The Moment appears to be upon us.

That said, Florida is unique among the big states in that change is achievable--ever-elusive, but doable in ways that California, New York and Texas are not. The political structures in Florida because it grew so quickly (from the smallest and poorest state in the South, smaller and poorer than Mississippi at the onset of WWII, to larger than New York today) are not yet set.

Further, Florida is (like Italy before Garibaldi) more of an idea than a reality. It is, in fact, a collection of states. Miami, Tampa Bay, the Keys, Jacksonville, the panhandle, etc., each is its own small kingdom. To those who know their way around each of them, and there are few who do, there is great opportunity. To those who do not, lies great peril. Because of the backgrounds of our staff and Board, we know thstate like the backs of our hands.

One major area of opportunity lies with the Florida people themselves. Our polling, which was quite deep, involving 800 registered Republican likely-voters, the core of the more Conservative party, revealed a body politic that has already figured out the problem, and willing to embrace solutions, even when they were posited in terms of "tough" vs. "smart" justice. In the core of the Republican Party, that head-to-head contest was carried by "smart": 65% to 26%.

Other opportunities include greater collaborations with our partner and affiliated institutions. By way of specific example, I would cite the progress of the medical marijuana legislation this past year in Florida. This legislation was aimed at decriminalizing the so-called "Charlotte's Web" strain of high-CBD, low-THC marijuana for use as a medication, especially for children with seizures. This conversation would have been DOA due to opposition with by the Florida Sheriff's Association, which opposition was starting to be mounted by their Chairman.. We were able, because of my membership in the FSA as a former Sheriff and credibility, to reverse their course. They went to neutral. The results were cathartic, and set the tone for conservative support in the Legislature. It passed overwhelmingly through both houses and has been signed into law by the Governor as of July 1.

THREATS—the biggest one is that the moment of opportunity may pass before the political ferment has jelled in Florida. The coalescence is occurring. For instance we were able to encourage the attendance of two key legislators to the recent Right on Crime meeting in DC, and the effects were salutatory. But, the trajectory will be slow if left to natural progression, perhaps slow enough to miss the chance if our society gets distracted in another direction. Short-term, the threat is the proximity of the elections. Unburdened by polling to the contrary, the political default is, too often, back to "tough," not smart. The cures for this are more polling, and behind the scenes work to allow a framework for progress during the non-election year to follow. Semantics may also help. This year's crack-in-the-dam progress on pill quantities was achieved with the understanding that no one referred to it as a change in minimum mandatory standards, which it was, to be sure.

What is needed is a catalytic agent, which can reach all, not just some of the other elements in the mix. That is, precisely, what PAJ was created to be. Thank you for helping us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison DeFoor