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## HCSO Statement

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**GRANIT, AMANDA M** <agranit@teamhcsso.com>  
To: Ray Roa <rroa@cltampa.com>  
Cc: Public Affairs <publicaffairs@teamhcsso.com>

Tue, Oct 7, 2025 at 2:57 PM

Ray,

Please see the following statement from Sheriff Chronister:

"I am aware of the letter submitted to the Governor by former Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office employee James Stahlschmidt, who served from September 1999 until his resignation in June 2018.

While he did not provide a reason for his resignation, I can tell you his Internal Affairs file contains multiple investigations for allegations of untruthfulness, violations of general proficiency, and abuse of the sheriff's office's equipment/vehicles.

Normally, I would not attempt to dignify such outlandish allegations coming from a struggling former employee whose career was fraught with complaints and internal affairs investigations, and whose timing seems suspicious. Despite sensational claims in his correspondence, this office remains committed to a complete, thorough, fair, and transparent investigation into any misconduct allegations.

At this time, three employees are the subject of an internal affairs investigation as it relates to Mr. Robert Roush. The employees are Colonel Christopher Rule, Colonel Michael Hannaford, and Captain Zuleydis Stearns. As with any internal inquiry, we will follow established procedures to ensure the facts are gathered objectively and any appropriate actions are taken based on evidence, not speculation.

I am disappointed and frankly embarrassed to even respond to an email that reads more like the rantings of a disgruntled former employee than a credible complaint. I remain committed to accountability and transparency, which includes investigating employee misconduct. The integrity of this entire organization depends on confronting issues directly, uncovering truth, and taking appropriate action."

---END OF STATEMENT--

We received the following email today about Mr. Stahlschmidt. As you are evaluating his credibility, we felt it was important to share this:

**Subject: JT Stahlschmidt letter Gov DeSantis**

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Dear Sheriff Chronister/Chad,

I'm in receipt of a copy of a letter from James Stahlschmidt to Governor DeSantis regarding you and your command staff, dated [October 6](#), 2025. \*See attached.

You'll recall my family's ongoing and extreme harassment by this same former deputy and his subsequent removal from the HCSO.

His own personnel file was sent anonymously to me after his resignation. His history with the department is nothing to sweep under the rug. I'm confounded as to how he has the sheer stupidity to draw attention to himself on this topic.

Per his personnel file, he literally let a woman die by refusing to let EMS treat her, 3 TIMES. He destroyed HCSO property on purpose on more than one occasion. He "lost" his badge and service weapon. He was caught lying and falsifying reports to cover his own butt. He was hanging out and cavorting with convicted felons and drug dealers in our neighborhood, daily. Encouraging them to further his agendas of retaliation against us and any HCSO employee who wasn't team JT. I could go on.

This man held a bonfire/clan type rally in front of my mother's home and placed a sign across from her home, encouraging further harassment. All because he went against HCSO policy and got deeply involved in neighborhood organizations and groups. Serving on their boards and offering legal advice in public gatherings in his capacity as a deputy. Apparently he was told by his command to stop and he

wrongly blamed my mother for his dressing down. That's all it took for him to harass an 84 year old widow into being afraid to even go outside her home of over 60 years.

My family and I want you to know we APPRECIATE you rooting out the bad apples like him and others. We know they can slip through for 18 years like he did under previous sheriffs. Once you got elected, you saw problem officers like him and rightfully took action to rectify a problem employee. It's unfortunate that so many staff are in this of late, but we see you being proactive and doing the right thing as sheriff to investigate and follow through with appropriate actions.

I'm copying Governor DeSantis' office so that he may have further context that this disgruntled former HCSO employee is strictly motivated by his own retaliation. He was allowed to resign instead of being terminated in the face of his own investigation. He forgot to include this fact in his assessment of your office.

He should've been fired, put on the Brady list and decommissioned over his repeated lies, but you were gracious to him and allowed him to resign. Not retire like he tells everyone.

He is a blight on all current and former LEO's. Thank you for always being attentive and keeping this big county safe.

Imagine doing it on all on horseback in 1885, when this county included Polk, Pasco, Pinellas and Manatee too. Like my great grandfather, James P Martin, did. I speak for the family when I tell you we are ALL proud of our sheriff and his office. You do the right thing in the face of many critics.

I believe our governor is wise and will see clearly for himself before taking Stahlschmidt's opinion on anything law enforcement related.

Thank you for keeping this county safe and for always being the sheriff we need.

Best/  
Carol

**Carol Martin Makryllos**

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Public Affairs Office  
Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office  
Office: 813-247-8086

To reach the on-call PIO, email [publicaffairs@teamhcsso.com](mailto:publicaffairs@teamhcsso.com) or call 813-205-4646

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Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. Do not send electronic mail to this entity if you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request. Instead, contact the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office via telephone at 813-247-8000 or US Mail at P.O. Box 3371, Tampa, FL 33601.