



“Ethics Reform Should Be a Non-Partisan Issue”

By Broward County Commissioner
And Vice Mayor Ken Keechl

Everywhere you go, you hear it: another elected official has been accused of unethical behavior. It's really a shame. As Henry Kissinger once said, “90% of the politicians give the other 10 % a bad reputation.” He may have been exaggerating, but not by much.

Fortunately, the people have had enough. In November 2008, the residents of Broward County voted overwhelmingly to establish a “Broward County Ethics Commission” whose “sole purpose shall be to establish a Code of Ethics for the Broward County Commission.” I supported the establishment of an Ethics Commission then, and I support it now.

The Broward County Ethics Commission will be made up of 11 members: each of the nine County Commissioners will appoint one member from his or her district, and the remaining two members will be appointed by the Broward League of Cities. The Ethics Commission will propose a Code of Ethics to the entire Broward County Commission by March 2010. If the Commission fails to adopt it within 6 months, the proposed Code of Ethics will be presented to the voters for acceptance or rejection on the November 2010 ballot.

I am often asked to characterize my political philosophy. I respond by labeling myself as a moderate Democrat—one who is simultaneously environmentally sensitive, business friendly, and fiscally conservative. But, more importantly, I have always said that, as your County Commissioner, I represent everyone in District Four—Democrat, Republican, Independent or otherwise.

My voting record and my numerous appointments to various County Boards over the last two ½ years demonstrate my philosophy, including my recent appointment to the Broward County Ethics Commission. After much reflection, I selected Robert Wolfe, a well known, active, and widely respected Republican, as my appointee. I did so because I believe that Bob will bring a different (and important) perspective to the Ethics Commission. Bob and I have discussed (and will continue to discuss) how together we can strengthen Broward's ethical standards.

In the meantime, I welcome your input. I will speak before the Broward County Ethics Commission in June. If you have any ideas about ethics reform in Broward, I would like to hear them. Feel free to email me at KKeechl@Broward.org.

My best to you and your families.

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