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For Immediate Release:

Sheriffs Ashley, Adkinson, Hall and Morgan Present Legislative Champion Award to Representative Matt Gaetz

Tallahassee, Fla. (July 24, 2013) – The Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Office presented Representative Matt Gaetz with the Legislative Champion Award at a ceremony held at the Okaloosa County Sheriff’s Office. Each year, the Florida Sheriffs Association recognizes state legislators who have made significant contributions to criminal justice and public safety through their leadership. During the 2013 legislative session, there were a number of key legislators upon whom the Sheriffs counted to ensure a successful session.

Representative Gaetz, Chair of the Criminal Justice Subcommittee, was a staunch ally to the Florida Sheriffs Association throughout the legislative session. Sharing a similar ideology to Florida Sheriffs, Representative Gaetz ensured that FSA priority bills were heard in his subcommittee and were championed by him throughout the session.

Representative Gaetz stated: “It is always an honor to work with the Florida Sheriffs Association to keep our state safe. In just one year, we have cracked down on synthetic drugs and criminalized gang recruitment, kept habitual criminals behind bars longer; and improved the effectiveness of Florida’s death penalty. Florida’s Sheriffs protect our citizens daily – and I look forward to putting more of their suggestions into law.”

“From helping support the battle against the bane of synthetic drugs in our state and championing open records laws, to cracking down on animal abusers or the criminal element that wants to lure our children into gangs, Rep. Matt Gaetz has proven to be an energetic, level-headed, and tenacious advocate for public safety. He is a true friend of the law enforcement community,” said Sheriff Ashley of Okaloosa County. “We are grateful for his common-sense insight into how to help solve many of the challenges we face and his determined approach to make Florida a safer place for all its citizens and visitors alike.”

“The Florida Sheriffs Association is honored to recognize Representative Gaetz for his tireless work to support Florida’s Sheriffs and all law enforcement across the state,” said Highlands County Sheriff and FSA President Susan Benton. “FSA applauds our partners in the Capitol for their continued support in protecting all Floridians.”

The Florida Sheriffs Association will continue to work with Florida representatives and senators on legislation geared toward keeping the state’s citizens and visitors safe. To see our 2013 legislative report, visit <https://www.flsheriffs.org/uploads/Final%20FSA%20Legislative%20Report%202013.pdf>.

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The Florida Sheriffs Association is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation made up of Florida’s Sheriffs, approximately 3,500 business leaders and 70,000 citizens throughout the state. Founded in 1893, FSA has quietly served the citizens of Florida by supporting the needs of the state’s law-enforcement community. Through the Florida Sheriffs Association, Sheriffs are given a forum to address lawmakers to push for positive changes in Florida’s public safety arena. FSA also provides Sheriffs’ Offices much-needed programs such as affordable training, special task forces and legislative and legal services. Dedicated to the prevention of juvenile delinquency and the development of lawful, productive citizens, FSA has established and continues to support the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, which manages facilities and programs throughout the state to help restore hope, fulfill dreams, and prepare boys and girls for the future. The Florida Sheriffs Association has grown to be one of the largest and most successful state law enforcement associations in the nation. For more information on the Florida Sheriffs Association, visit www.flsheriffs.org.

What Sheriffs Are Saying

“Representative Matt Gaetz has helped the sheriff’s throughout Florida to combat crime with his strong support in the Legislature. His willingness to sponsor and support tougher laws to deal with criminals, has truly made Florida a safer place to live.” - Sheriff Hall, Santa Rosa County

“We are honored to be in attendance and lend our voice in congratulating Rep. Gaetz as he receives the legislative champion award.” -Sheriff Morgan, Escambia County

“Representative Gaetz has always shown a passionate desire to protect the citizens of the state of Florida and we appreciate all his efforts to support the men and women of law enforcement.” - Sheriff Adkinson, Walton County