



Press Release: October 13, 2020

Contact: Taylor Hopkins, (407) 675-6412, press@floridarrc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Voting Rights Bus Tour Makes its way to Escambia, Bay Counties

Florida Rights Restoration Coalition kicks off multi-city tour for early voting initiative in support of returning citizens, people with past felony convictions

Pensacola, FL (October 13, 2020) — The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRC) is taking their voting rights work on the road as they start a 10-day bus tour to mobilize returning citizens, people with past felony convictions, to the polls for early voting. This tour begins today, October 13, as Desmond Meade and Neil Volz visit Pensacola and Panama City.

“This election will be the first time many returning citizens will have the opportunity to cast their vote,” said Desmond Meade, executive director of FRRC. “In counties across Florida, elections for local, state and federal officials — as well as important ballot measures — are often decided by just a couple of hundred votes. Returning citizens have been waiting for this moment. We are bringing our voice and life experiences to vote on issues and representatives that impact our everyday lives.”

In 2018, more than two-thirds of Floridians voted in favor of restoring voting rights to 1.4 million returning citizens. Florida’s legislators, however, amended the law, adding a requirement that returning citizens pay their remaining fines and fees before re-enfranchisement.

FRRC, with the support of more than 86,000 donors nationwide, helped raise more than \$27 million to pay returning citizen’s fines and fees. They removed the voting obstacle for tens of thousands of returning citizens. FRRC’s current charge is to help ensure and encourage those returning citizens and their families who have registered to vote to use their voice and voting power by Nov. 3.

“There are people trying to keep returning citizens from the polls, but we will turn out in large numbers because it is our constitutional right and this is our time,” Meade says. “Early voting begins on Oct. 19 and FRRC’s Free the Vote events are on Oct. 24. We will be supporting returning citizens to make sure their voices are heard and that Florida is home to an inclusive democracy.”



FRRC returning citizens will be canvassing the following communities:

10/13 - Pensacola, Panama City

10/14 – Tallahassee

10/15 – St. Petersburg, Tampa

10/16 – Polk and Marion Counties

10/19 – Miami

10/20 – Ft. Lauderdale, Palm Beach 10/21 – Indian River and Martin Counties 10/22 – Orlando

###

About The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

FRRC is a grassroots, membership organization run by Returning Citizens (Formerly Convicted Persons) who are dedicated to ending the disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions and creating a more comprehensive and humane reentry system that will enhance successful reentry, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety. For more information, visit <https://floridarrc.com/>.