



Press Release: October 16, 2020

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Voting Rights Bus Tour Visits Polk County**

**WHO:**

Florida Rights Restoration Coalition - Desmond Meade and Neil Volz  
Sevyn Streeter, singer and songwriter, Haines City hometowner  
Morris West, Haines City Mayor  
Horace West, Haines City Commissioner  
Pastor Marye Anglin, Tabernacle of Praise  
Betty Jo White, President Northeast Revitalization Group

**WHAT:** The FRRRC #FreeTheVote Bus will be at the Oakland Auditorium in Haines City tomorrow to mobilize returning citizens, people with past felony convictions, to the polls for early voting. They will be leading a rally and community walk to connect with returning citizens and the rest of the community to mobilize around early voting, starting Monday.

**WHERE:** 915 Avenue E., Haines City, FL, 33844

**WHEN:** Friday, October 16 at 3:30 p.m.

**WHY:** 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. FRRRC wants to make sure that the promise of amendment 4 is kept.

FRRRC, 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 pay-to-vote obstacle for more than 35,000 returning citizens. FRRRC's charge is to help ensure returning citizens and their families use their voice and voting power by Nov. 3.

**QUOTES:**

"This election will be the first time many of these returning citizens will have the opportunity to cast their vote," said Desmond Meade, executive director of FRRRC. "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."

"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 FRRRC'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.”

**INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Desmond Meade, Executive Director, FRRC
- Neil Volz, Deputy Director, FRRC

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**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/>.