On Wednesday, March 16th, the CFHLA Political Committee announced its first candidate endorsements of the 2016 Election Season, voting unanimously to endorse the re-election campaigns of Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings and Osceola County Property Appraiser Katrina Scarborough.

"Both Sheriff Demings and Ms. Scarborough are well-respected public officials who have served the community and Hospitality Industry well," said CFHLA Political Committee Chairman Jay Leonard of the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area. "These individuals have regularly met with CFHLA Members and Leadership to discuss Hospitality Industry concerns and continually offer their support to the Industry that employs one in three Central Florida residents."
election bid in 2012.

Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings

Osceola County Property Appraiser Katrina Scarborough

CHANGE
Meetings, PAC/PC Committee Members voted to appoint Keith Wolling of the B Resort & Spa Lake Buena Vista as the PAC/PC Vice-Chairman, effective immediately through December 31, 2016.

Additionally, the PAC/PC Committee Members voted Mark Politte of the DoubleTree by Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Orlando as the new PAC/PC Boards Secretary, previously held by Keith Wolling.
Furthermore, **Ross Burke** of the Blue Heron Beach Resort was appointed to fill a PAC/PC Board Member Vacancy.
NELSON

The CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee met on Wednesday, March 9th at the Walt Disney World Contemporary Resort (Thank you Sharon Smoley) with Orange County Commissioner Bryan Nelson to discuss a number of Orange County Hospitality Industry priorities.

Commissioner Nelson, whose 2014 campaign for County Commission was endorsed by CFHLA, discussed a range of Orange County topics with the CFHLA GA Committee. Similar to the February Committee Meeting with Commissioner Scott Boyd, GA Members were eager to discuss potentially amending the Orange County alcohol ordinance to allow alcohol service to begin at lodging properties as early as 7 AM, compared to the existing starting time of 11 AM.

Orange County properties are currently at a "competitive disadvantage" to neighboring counties that allow alcohol service prior to 11 AM, which accommodate weekend brunch opportunities and other special events where Orange County visitors would expect alcohol service.

Commissioner Nelson also provided updates on Orange County Charter Review proposals relating to the Tourist Development Tax and Initiative Petition Drives.

The GA Committee also received a Legislative Session recap from CFHLA Lobbying Partner GrayRobinson, which included updates relating to the expansion of the Tourist Development Tax and the Seminole Tribe Gaming Compact negotiations.

Former Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Scott Tripoli, Orange County Commissioner Bryan Nelson, and CFHLA Treasurer Jetse Pottinga of the Melia Orlando Suite Hotel
Committee Meeting Sponsor:

COFFEE

On Friday, March 11th members of the CFHLA Political Action Committee held "coffee meetings" with two Osceola County candidates for office - Property Appraiser Katrina Scarborough and County Commission District 1 Candidate Peggy Choudhry - to build relationships and to educate these individuals on Central Florida hospitality priorities.

Property Appraiser Scarborough and Mrs. Choudhry were provided full background to CFHLA including the Association's philanthropic initiatives such as the Adopt-A-School program and CFHLA Cares, a description of CFHLA's public policy priorities, and CFHLA's Osceola County programs - including the State of Osceola County and CFHLA's quarterly Osceola County Lodging meetings featuring Elected Officials.

Chuck Simikian of the Nickelodeon Suites Resort, CFHLA Historian Laura Sherman of the CLC Regal Oaks, Osceola County Property Appraiser Katrina Scarborough, CFHLA PAC/PC Chairman Jay Leonard of the Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area, and CFHLA Board Brian Wong of the Celebration Suite Hotel
HB 7099

During the Legislative Session, CFHLA was actively engaged with State Representatives and State Senators relating to HB 7099 - the House Tax Cut Package - which included language pushed by State Rep. Matt Gaetz that would expand the permitted uses of the Tourist Development Tax (TDT) to allow coastal counties to use up to 10% of their TDT dollars towards law enforcement funding.

On Tuesday, March 1st, this bill was heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee and a contentious debate ensued.

Senator Dorothy Hukill proposed a strike-all amendment that removed all of the proposed changes to the Tourist Development Tax, which was adopted. However, former-Senate President Don Gaetz then proposed an amendment similar to Rep. Matt Gaetz’s original language that would allow three coastal counties (Bay, Okaloosa, and Walton) to use 10% of their TDT dollars for law enforcement funding purposes.

Senator Alan Hays, from the Central Florida delegation, vocally opposed the amendment, emphasizing that TDT money should be protected and utilized for tourism promotion purposes only. Regrettably, the amendment passed on an 11-8 vote (all Central Florida Senators on the Committee opposed this TDT-expansion proposal) and the bill subsequently passed both the House and Senate in conferencing.

ALCOHOL

As discussed at the March CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting, CFHLA has recently established an Orange County Alcohol Ordinance Subcommittee to discuss and ultimately amend the current Orange County
establishments prior to 11 AM.

This Subcommittee is composed of Hospitality Leaders - including Lodging General Managers, Lodging Food & Beverage Directors, and Allied Member representatives.

The first meeting of this Subcommittee will be in the coming weeks with Orange County Commissioner Scott Boyd.

FUNDRAISER

Save the Date: June 1...

On Wednesday, June 1st, the CFHLA Political Action Committee will produce its annual PAC Reception fundraising event at the B Resort & Spa Lake Buena Vista, (Thank you Keith Wolling), for the third consecutive year.

Each year, this entertaining networking event features over a dozen prominent Central Florida Elected Officials who, wearing aprons and white gloves, serve hors d'oeuvres to over 100 CFHLA Members. This fundraiser also includes a live auction which features premier lodging stays and golf packages.

If you are interested in serving as a 2016 PAC Reception sponsor, please contact CFHLA Staff Member Lisa Harley at sponsorships@cfhla.org.

BACCHUS
Below please find news articles, relating to the political interests of the Hospitality Industry:

TOURIST TAX COLLECTIONS ON
TRADITIONAL HOTELS IN OSCEOLA

STARWOOD SIGNS FIRST U.S.-CUBA HOTEL DEAL SINCE 1959 REVOLUTION

SEN. MCCASKILL INTRODUCES BILL AGAINST HIDDEN RESORT FEES