

Supreme Court of Florida

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022

CASE NO.: SC22-1710

STATEWIDE GRAND JURY #22

ORDER DIRECTING IMPANELMENT OF A STATEWIDE GRAND JURY

THE COURT has received a Petition from the Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, for an order to impanel a statewide grand jury. “[T]his Court’s responsibility in impaneling a statewide grand jury is ‘ministerial in nature’” and is limited to reviewing whether the petition meets the statutory requirements. *State ex rel. Reichle v. Edwards*, 409 So. 2d 1043, 1044 (Fla. 1982) (quoting *In re Advisory Opinion to the Governor*, 290 So. 2d 473, 474 (Fla. 1974)). Being fully advised of the relevant matters, the Court hereby finds as follows:

A. The Petitioner, the Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, has alleged that good and sufficient reason exists and that it is in the public interest to impanel a statewide grand jury, with jurisdiction throughout the State of Florida, to investigate crime, return indictments, make presentments, and otherwise perform all functions of a grand jury with regard to the offenses listed in section 905.34, Florida Statutes (2022).

B. The matters to be inquired into are any offense listed in section 905.34 that:

(1) relates to the following:

(a) Individuals, persons, and entities, including, but not limited to, pharmaceutical manufacturers (and their executive officers) and other medical associations or organizations involved in the design, development, clinical testing or investigation, manufacture, marketing, representation, advertising, promotion, labeling, distribution, formulation, packing, sale, purchase, donation, dispensing, prescribing, administration, or use of vaccines purported to prevent COVID-19 infection, symptoms, and transmission;

(b) other criminal activity or wrongdoing that the statewide grand jury uncovers during the course of the investigation if it determines that pursuing the criminal activity or wrongdoing is in the best interests of the investigation;

and

(2) is occurring, or has occurred, in two or more judicial circuits as part of a related transaction or is connected with an organized criminal conspiracy affecting two or more judicial circuits, as required by section 905.34, Florida Statutes.

WHEREFORE, THE COURT, pursuant to the provisions of sections 905.31 through 905.40, Florida Statutes, Statewide Grand Jury Act, hereby orders as follows:

1. A statewide grand jury shall be promptly impaneled for a term of twelve calendar months, to run from the date of impanelment, with jurisdiction throughout the State of Florida, to investigate crime, return indictments, make presentments, and otherwise perform all functions of a grand jury with regard to the offenses stated herein.

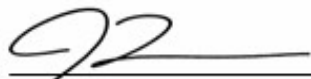
2. The statewide grand jury shall be drawn from the certified jury lists submitted by the chief judges of the Fifth, Sixth, Tenth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Judicial Circuits.

3. The Honorable Ronald Ficarrotta, Chief Judge in and for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, is designated as presiding judge over the statewide grand jury. In his capacity as the presiding judge, the Honorable Ronald Ficarrotta shall maintain judicial supervision of the statewide grand jury, and all indictments, presentments, and formal returns of any kind made by such grand jury shall be returned to the presiding judge. The presiding judge may designate an alternate presiding judge in the event of calendar conflicts or otherwise and to assist in the administrative process of the statewide grand jury.

4. John A. Tomasino, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Florida, is hereby designated clerk of this statewide grand jury and is empowered to deputize any clerk of a circuit court or any deputy clerk of a circuit court to issue necessary process and to carry out the administrative functions of the statewide grand jury.

MUÑIZ, C.J., and CANADY, POLSTON, COURIEL, and GROSSHANS, JJ., concur.
LABARGA, J., would deny.
FRANCIS, J., did not participate.

A True Copy
Test:



John A. Tomasino
Clerk, Supreme Court



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Served:

HON. RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR
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HON. ANTHONY RONDOLINO, CHIEF JUDGE
HON. DANIEL BURRELL MERRITT JR., CHIEF JUDGE
NICHOLAS BERNARD COX
HON. RONALD N. FICARROTTA, CHIEF JUDGE
HON. CHARLES EDWARD ROBERTS, CHIEF JUDGE
HON. CINDY STUART, CLERK