



*Matt Puckett*

# From Your Deputy Executive Director

## Our Presence Matters!

From the outside looking in, the large presence of people the PBA maintains at the Capitol seems superfluous. A team of lobbyists and leadership officials are always present on any given day, even when the issues discussed that day are pointless to our cause. We call that manning the fort where I'm from. A mild point could be made that fifty people at the Capitol clogs up the halls, committee rooms, and the fourth floor rotunda for no benefit other than pure bravado. The counter argument to that point is made year after year when some group decides our issues do not mesh well with theirs. The bravado of having fifty people at the Capitol pays off big at that moment.



*The Legislative Session: A typical day at PBA... before heading to the Capitol to lobby our causes.*

### More to the Mild Point

Absolutely, at various times during this session, even I looked around at all the people wearing the PBA pin wondering, "Just who is that guy?" It is also true that several committee meetings were standing room only in direct correlation to the proportion of officers we brought in to hear our one bill that lacked any of the fireworks a reasonable person would conclude could draw such a crowd.



*PBA at the Committee Meeting discussion of the Florida Highway Patrol Sergeant Nicholas Sottile Act (HB 73, SB 128) which allows for the separation of an agency if it exceeds 1,200 officers.*

Let there be no doubt that a number of normally fast paced staffers were delayed in their attempts to deliver an item to their respective bosses, because we lumbered through the corridors en masse... sue us.

### The Counterpoint.

Our members are learning valuable lessons, not to mention getting to know their local legislators when it counts. There's no substitute for the direct experience of seeing how your favorite legislator actually votes when you are advocating for an organization of our size. Our large contingent of advocates is also the pool from which our future association leadership will be drawn and therefore, they need this taste of success and disappointment as a frame of reference. Most members who visit leave with a positive



*PBA members making their presence felt in the Senate, catching Senators before voting on PBA issues.*

perspective that some good work is being accomplished up here regardless of the eventual outcome. Others get the bug to come back again and again.

### More Bravado.

The genius of our brigade style lobbying shines through when controversy on one of our issues presents itself. Yes, most of the conflict resolution and arguing with the opposition is done by just a handful of people within our group, but it's the rapid message delivery when all else fails that makes our association different, if not special. As blusterous as this reads—we are seldom outmanned by our opponents. Not to mention our arguments are usually better. However, it's not always about who has the more articulate argument. Nope. If we are able to reach the target audience and make our case before they can... then odds are we win. Winning! It trumps a mild point.

**Remember this:** We are faced with these challenges every year and luckily we always have an eager cadre of members ready to deliver our side of the story at lightning speed. Call it what you wish, but it works. 🍀



*SLEO Chapter members with Representative Michael Scionti at the Capitol.*



*SCO Chapter members at the Senate with SCO Chapter President Jim Baiardi.*

### The Top Ten Signs the Charges Won't Hold Up in Court

1. When the boss asks if you read the suspect his Miranda rights, you say, "No. But I just got a great deal on car insurance."
2. Your "probable cause" was the fact that "the suspect just looked like the kind of person who does drugs."
3. You charged them with "willfully acting like a total moron."
4. The defendant is worth \$40 million and plays golf with Alan Dershowitz.
5. Your star eyewitness is a paranoid, schizophrenic crack-whore.
6. The case will be heard by Judge John "Set 'Em All Free" Buckstone.
7. The only evidence was the stolen pizza, which was subsequently eaten by Rosco the K-9.
8. It's actually not illegal to possess 12 pounds of tarragon. Honest mistake, though—who walks around with 12 pounds of tarragon?
9. You're in the 9th Circuit.
10. You once called the judge hearing the case "the ultimate enemy of justice" to his face.

