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Attorney General Ashley Moody News Release

Criminals Taking Advantage of Ian Victims

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is sending a strong message to anyone who might try to take advantage of Floridians displaced or harmed by Hurricane Ian—you will spend maximum time allowed by law behind bars. Today, Attorney General Moody sent a memo to state attorneys in all 20 judicial circuits in Florida, outlining state law requiring that no defendant charged with a theft crime committed in an area under a declared state of emergency may be released prior to a first appearance hearing.

Additionally, Attorney General Moody requests that state attorneys seek pretrial detention to the fullest extent possible for defendants who commit crimes during the current state of emergency. Florida Statute §907.041(4)(b) directs that no non-monetary releases shall be granted for dangerous crimes at the first appearance hearing under certain circumstances.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Floridians displaced by Hurricane Ian have enough to worry about without having to fear theft or burglary at the hands of offenders previously arrested for crimes during the state of emergency. These unscrupulous offenders must remain locked up where they can no longer prey on vulnerable Floridians. I strongly urge state attorneys to seek pretrial detention to the fullest extent possible for any criminal heartless enough to victimize Floridians during this extremely challenging time.”

The memo suggests state attorneys consider discussing augmenting the circuit bond schedules during this state of emergency with the chief judge in their circuits. This action would enhance, increase and/or eliminate the standard bonds for theft, burglary and other crimes related to the circumstances created by the exigency that is the basis of the declared state of emergency.

To read the memo, click [here](#).

In addition to the memo, Attorney General’s Moody’s Price Gouging Hotline remains activated. Consumers can report instances of severe price increases on essential commodities needed to help recover from the storm. The Florida Attorney General’s Rapid Response Team is quickly responding to consumer contacts alleging price gouging.

For tips on reporting price gouging, click [here](#).

For more information on price gouging, click [here](#).

Anyone who suspects price gouging can report it to the Florida Attorney General’s Office by using the [No Scam app](#), visiting [MyFloridaLegal.com](#) or calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM. Attorney General Moody’s No Scam app can be downloaded for free on Apple and Android devices

through the app store by searching No Scam.