

# STATE OF FLORIDA

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 21-22

WHEREAS, the Honorable MELISSA W. NELSON, State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida, has advised Governor RON DESANTIS that Loretta Lavender was arrested for driving under the influence; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable MELISSA W. NELSON has also advised the Governor that Loretta Lavender is a friend of the state attorney; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable MELISSA W. NELSON, to avoid a conflict of interest or any appearance of impropriety, has voluntarily disqualified herself and has requested the executive assignment of another State Attorney with respect to the investigation and prosecution of this case and all related matters; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable R.J. LARIZZA, State Attorney for the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, has agreed to accept an executive assignment in this matter; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the State of Florida and of the ends of justice that the Honorable R.J. LARIZZA discharge the duties of the Honorable MELISSA W. NELSON, pursuant to section 27.14, Florida Statutes.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RON DESANTIS, Governor of Florida, in obedience to my solemn constitutional duty to “take care that the laws be faithfully executed,” and pursuant

to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, issue the following Executive Order, effective immediately:

Section 1.

The Honorable R.J. LARIZZA, State Attorney for the Seventh Judicial Circuit of Florida, referred to as the “Assigned State Attorney,” is assigned to discharge the duties of the Honorable MELISSA W. NELSON, State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida, as they relate to the investigation, prosecution, and all matters related to Loretta Lavender.

Section 2.

The Assigned State Attorney or one or more Assistant State Attorneys and Investigators, who have been designated by the Assigned State Attorney, shall proceed immediately to the Fourth Judicial Circuit of Florida, and are vested with the authority to perform the duties prescribed herein.

Section 3.

All residents of the Fourth Judicial Circuit are requested, and all public officials are directed, to cooperate and render whatever assistance is necessary to the Assigned State Attorney, so that justice may be served.

Section 4.

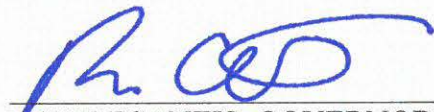
The period of this Executive Assignment shall be for one (1) year, to and including February 9, 2022.

Section 5.

The Assigned State Attorney shall notify the Governor on or before January 9, 2022,  
if additional time is required.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have  
hereunto set my hand and have caused the  
Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed  
at Tallahassee, this 9th day of February, 2021.

  
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RON DESANTIS, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

  
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SECRETARY OF STATE

2021 FEB -9 AM 11:37  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
TALLAHASSEE, FL

FILED