



## Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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### Media Release

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**From:** Denise M. Moloney  
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**Re:** Federal Inmate Housing Program Hits \$2 Million Mark

**Date:** June 21, 2017

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Sheriff Al Nienhuis is pleased to announce that the Federal Inmate Housing Program at the Hernando County Detention Center has finally hit the \$2 million mark.

Hernando County residents may recall that back in 2010 the Sheriff's Office was asked to assume responsibility for the detention center. At that time, a comprehensive independent study, commissioned by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), was done to document the condition of the facility. The study found that there were approximately \$15 million in repairs needed to meet code and security needs. It was even suggested that tearing down the detention center and building a new one would make better sense.

The County Commission, at that time, promised \$5 million for this project; however, the BOCC was only able to set aside \$3 million for the needed repairs. There were several media reports in September 2010 documenting this controversy. Unfortunately, much of the money set aside has already been used, and there is not enough left to do additional upgrades to the detention center.

In June 2014, the Sheriff's Office began housing less than 10 US Marshal Prisoners. Over the next year, detention center administrators worked closely with the US Marshal's Office to increase the daily rate received per inmate and, at the same time, increased the number of inmates housed at the facility. On more than one occasion, Sheriff Nienhuis took the opportunity to personally speak to the US Marshal for the middle district of Florida, to promote the facility.

In the last 18 months or so, the Sheriff's Office has averaged between 50 and 100 Federal Inmates. While this puts a strain on detention center staff, the good news is that over \$2 million has been put in the bank to prepare for costly renovations. Plans are to use some of this money to provide extra manpower at the detention center to monitor the inmates. The

Sheriff's Office will be working closely with the County Commission to start prioritizing some of the most urgent repairs and security upgrades.

The **really good news** is that this creative solution, combined with the hard work and dedication of the detention center staff, will allow **this** problem to be tackled without asking Hernando County taxpayers for any additional money.

#### **The Office of Sheriff:**

The Office of the Sheriff is established by the Florida Constitution. As a constitutional officer, the Sheriff has the exclusive authority to administer his or her agency and is responsible for preserving the peace throughout the entire county, carrying out the laws of the state, the orders of Florida courts, and the ordinances of the Board of County Commissioners. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement and correctional officer of the county.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis was initially appointed as the Sheriff of Hernando County by the Governor in January of 2011. He was then elected by the people of Hernando County in 2012, and remains accountable to them.