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CFO Jeff Atwater Appoints Sha’Ron James as Florida’s Insurance Consumer Advocate

7/28/2015

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater today announced the appointment of Sha’Ron James, a long-time voice for the people of Florida, as the state’s Insurance Consumer Advocate effective August 3. The role of Florida’s Insurance Consumer Advocate is to independently and ardently represent the needs of policyholders when insurance decisions are made. James enters the role with a history highlighted by years of dedication advocating for Floridians on insurance-related matters.

“Sha’Ron’s experience holding insurance companies accountable and her in-depth understanding of the insurance industry raises the bar for Florida’s advocacy efforts,” said CFO Atwater. “Sha’Ron has fought to ensure that the interests of consumers come before profit and special interests, and I am confident she will carry her passion for the people of Florida into this role.”

A Tallahassee resident, James most recently served as the Director of the Department of Financial Services’ Division of Rehabilitation & Liquidation, which oversees complex litigation proceedings if a Florida insurance company faces financial failure. In this role, James fervently represented Florida’s families, recognizing that consumers, far more than company board members or directors, are most impacted by the collapse of a carrier’s ability to provide coverage.

When an insurance company enters rehabilitation or liquidation, consumers are often left vulnerable, scrambling to find replacement insurance coverage and wondering if they should expect unaffordable bills due to unpaid claims. Whether it’s navigating property coverage to protect a home, life insurance to protect a family’s lasting legacy, or health coverage to ensure loved ones receive necessary medicines or medical attention, James has guided thousands of Florida policyholders through these complicated and trying experiences.

Knowing that Florida families rely on quality insurance products, James demands the highest levels of integrity, transparency and communication when helping consumers navigate the insurance process. In the midst of an ever-evolving insurance market, James is committed to finding solutions to the insurance problems facing Floridians, calling attention to questionable insurance practices, and ensuring that the market responds to the needs of Florida’s diverse population.

James received her bachelor's degree in economics from Florida A&M University, her master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University, and her juris doctor from the University of Florida. She holds an advance project management certificate from Stanford University, and carries an extensive list of professional awards and accomplishments. James replaces the recently retired Steve Burgess in the ICA role. Toma Wilkerson, who currently serves as Assistant Director of the Division of Rehabilitation & Liquidation, has been named Director.

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Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater, a statewide elected official, oversees the Department of Financial Services. CFO Atwater's priorities include fighting financial fraud, abuse and waste in government, reducing government spending and regulatory burdens that chase away businesses, and providing transparency and accountability in spending. Follow the activities of the Department on Facebook ([FLDFS](#)) and Twitter ([@FLDFS](#)).

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