



As we enthusiastically welcome 2012 and begin preparations for a busy and demanding election cycle, it is my hope that all eligible Pasco County citizens will exercise their precious right to vote. Deeply embedded in our heritage for over 400 years, electing a representative government has become part of the American identity. Throughout history, there have been many who sacrificed much in defense of this right, and it's a privilege I hope you never take lightly,

That a system of representative government still exists 400 years later is really no coincidence. From our country's beginnings, the earliest forms of government were based on respect for the inalienable rights of individuals within a group. The first colonists of the New World were wise enough to realize it was essential for their survival. Within 18 days of landing in this country, the Jamestown settlers conducted an election for the purpose of choosing a president. Similarly, the Pilgrims established the Mayflower Compact, a self-governing social agreement drafted while still aboard ship and in response to impending mutiny. Forty-one men signed the Compact and agreed to abide by the new government's laws in exchange for shared protection. Those pioneering individuals set the precedence for our forefathers who labored over a Declaration of Independence based on fairness and equality for the general good and in keeping with the will of the majority.

Voting as a key component of American culture is not only a right but a responsibility. Over the past few years I have been using the mantra "Freedom Requires Responsibility", and lately the paraphrase "Democracy is not a spectator sport." I firmly believe this as I willingly fulfill my duties as the chief elections official in Pasco County. If there is anything my office can do to help you fulfill your responsibility this election cycle, please let us know. As stated in the first paragraph of our Mission Statement, we are committed to providing exemplary public service to the citizens of Pasco County. My staff and I stand ready to help!

