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Governor-Elect Crist Appoints Leaders for the Division of Emergency Management, Department of Management Services, and Agency for Workforce Innovation

Governor-Elect Charlie Crist today appointed Craig Fugate as Director of the Division of Emergency Management, Ruben Almaguer as Deputy Director of the Division, Kevin Hyde Secretary of the Department of Management Services, and Monesia Brown Director of the Agency for Workforce Innovation.

“These individuals bring unparalleled qualifications as well as heartfelt desire to serve the public good in their respective offices,” said Governor-Elect Crist. “I look forward to working with them to ensure Florida’s best years are still ahead.”

The Division of Emergency Management works with local governments to prepare for, respond to, and recover from state emergencies. Departments within the Division focus on the development and implementation of disaster management programs to address threats including extreme heat, wildfire, hurricanes and hazardous materials among others.

“Craig has been an exceptional leader in this position and we are extremely thankful that he has joined the administration,” said Governor-Elect Crist, “I am confident Craig and Ruben will work to ensure that Florida remains an international example of exceptional disaster management.”

Craig Fugate is currently the Director of the Division of Emergency Management. He formerly served as Chief of the Bureau of Preparedness and Response within the Division and as the Emergency Manager for Alachua
Mr. Fugate has served as a volunteer fire fighter, paramedic, and as a Lieutenant with Alachua County Fire Rescue. He has been awarded Florida’s Distinguished Service Medal and was recently inducted into the National Guard Hall of Fame.

“Florida has made great strides in emergency preparedness over the years but there is much work to do,” said Fugate. “I look forward to leading our efforts in the years to come and am happy to join the Crist Team.”

Ruben Almaguer is currently the Administrative Operations Chief of the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department and previously served as the Communications Division Chief, Special Operations Chief, and Urban Search & Rescue Program Manager. Mr. Almaguer has international, domestic and local experience in disaster response including service in Venezuela, Colombia, El Salvador, Kenya, Turkey, Taiwan and Africa. He served as an Incident Support Team Operations Chief during Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Almaguer graduated from Barry University, Florida International University, and received a Masters Degree in Homeland and Defense Security from the Naval Post Graduate School.

“I am thankful to be presented with this opportunity,” said Almaguer. “I hope we can make great strides in improving disaster management in Florida and continuing to aide our neighbors.”

The Department of Management Services focuses on increasing citizen access to government, delivering cost-effective products and services, and promoting and supporting economic development. Additionally, the Department provides state agencies with assistance in purchasing, human resource management, specialized services, real estate management, retirement benefits, and insurance benefits.

“Kevin’s leadership and management experience will be a valuable asset to the state,” said Governor-Elect Crist. “In his first year of service on the Jacksonville City Council he was chosen to be a floor leader and later became vice-president and council president. This - coupled with his exceptional work at his law practice - provide a real insight to his character and personal integrity.”

Kevin Hyde is a partner with Foley and Lardner, LLP and is a member of the firm’s Labor & Employment Practice and Automotive Industry Team. He is a
certified specialist in the area of labor and employment law. Mr. Hyde is a member of the Jacksonville City Council where he serves on the Rules Committee and as Chairman of the Finance Committee. He graduated from the University of South Florida and the University of Florida College of Law.

“I am looking forward to working with Governor-Elect Crist to ensure that Florida’s state agencies operate more efficiently and effectively. I am optimistic about the possibilities that lie ahead,” said Hyde.

**The Agency for Workforce Innovation** focuses on education and development for members of Florida’s workforce. The agency provides a myriad of programs and services including a Citizen Soldier Program, Office of Early Learning, Unemployment Appeals Commission, and a Veterans Program.

“I am thrilled that Monesia has decided to continue her service to the State of Florida,” said Governor-Elect Crist. “Her experience working with several different agencies will be an invaluable asset. She was a tremendous resource in the Attorney General's Office and has shown great leadership during the transition period.”

**Monesia Brown** currently serves as the Transition Director for Lieutenant Governor-Elect Jeff Kottkamp. She served as the Director of Legislative Affairs and Special Counsel to Attorney General Charlie Crist, as Special Counsel to the General Counsel at the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, and as the General Counsel at the Department of Management Services. Ms. Brown graduated from Illinois State University and the University of Wisconsin Law School.

“Florida has seen tremendous economic growth over the last several years and Florida’s Workforce is the key to maintaining that prosperity,” said Brown. “I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this agency.”