



For Immediate Release

Coalition Forms to Support Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jim Naugle, Respond to Public Health Crisis

Fort Lauderdale, FL (August 3, 2007) -- HealthyPublicPlaces.com, a newly formed coalition of local and national groups, announced its support today for Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jim Naugle and for measures to stem Broward's public health crisis.

"We have an epidemic on our hands," said Dr. O'Neal Dozier, HealthyPublicPlaces.com coalition member and Senior Pastor of Worldwide Christian Center in Pompano Beach.

"More than 8,000 people have died from AIDS in Broward County since the early 1980s. Everyone, regardless of his place on the political spectrum, should agree that public sex—whether it be in parks, restrooms, department stores, or bathhouses—endangers lives and fuels the public health crisis we face in Broward."

The Broward Public Health Department reports that our county leads the nation in the number of new AIDS cases with 58.4 per 100,000 people. A staggering one in five men who have sex with other men is HIV positive. The recent growth of the epidemic is indicated by the fact that HIV has increased within white men who have sex with men by 120 percent since 2000.

George Castrataro, assistant director of the Broward County Health Department's Office of HIV/AIDS, told Mayor Naugle in a December 8, 2006, e-mail that "anecdotal findings now support that Broward is leading the nation in the incidence of new cases within men who have sex with men."

"Given this epidemic," said Dozier, "the uproar from local politicians and leaders of the homosexual community over Mayor Naugle's comments appears ludicrous and irresponsible. These leaders—along with the local media—should be joining him in calling for an end to irresponsible, illegal sexual behavior that leads, often, to death from AIDS. Instead, these leaders have more to say about the possible loss of tourism dollars than the actual loss of human life."

HealthyPublicPlaces.com coalition members include: Americans for Truth, Christian Anti-Defamation Commission, Christian Interactive Network, Concerned Women for America, Coral Ridge Ministries, Faith2Action, Stephen Bennett Ministries, and the Worldwide Christian Center.

“I am very encouraged at this organized show of public support for myself, but, more importantly, for the cause of protecting Broward public health,” said Fort Lauderdale Mayor Jim Naugle. “I would encourage residents of Fort Lauderdale and Broward who share a concern for healthy public places to join this coalition and call for measures that will save lives and make our community a much more livable and healthy place.”

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