

Evelyn Castillo-Bach Rejects Calls to Abandon Criminal Justice Reform Stance in Florida Governor Race

I will be the first governor to prioritize criminal justice reform, including removing veterans from prisons into medical facilities where they heal.

PEMBROKE PINES, FL, UNITED STATES, May 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Evelyn Castillo-Bach, candidate for Florida Governor in 2026, rejects conventional political wisdom that she should abandon her position on criminal justice reform because her son is currently incarcerated. She argues that for nearly twenty-five years she has monitored the [Florida Department of Corrections](#) — the largest state agency with a \$3.8 billion budget — making her uniquely qualified to fix a system that runs on bodies, vendors and budgets instead of justice.



Evelyn seated with the American flag and Florida flag behind her,

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I will be the first governor to prioritize criminal justice reform, including removing veterans from prisons and into special medical facilities where they may heal.”

*Evelyn Castillo-Bach,
Candidate for Florida
Governor*

Castillo-Bach has been an Independent voter for most of her adult life and is running as a Democrat for the 2026 Florida gubernatorial election. Her campaign centers on three pillars: Health, Home, Freedom -- with the motto "People First, Not Politics."

The candidate points to the high-profile case of Jeffrey Epstein, a billionaire with extensive connections to political and financial power, as a clear example of prosecutorial discretion protecting the wealthy. In 2008, then-U.S. Attorney Alexander Acosta approved a non-prosecution agreement for Epstein in the Southern District of Florida that allowed him to avoid federal charges and continue criminal activity. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of

Professional Responsibility later found that Acosta exhibited "poor judgment" in granting the deal. In 2019, a federal judge ruled that the agreement violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act because Epstein's victims were not notified.

"Whether state or federal, a prosecutor with unchecked power who answers to no one is a threat to every family in Florida," stated Evelyn Castillo-Bach. She pointed to how "this same pattern of unchecked prosecutorial discretion has affected my own family." She maintains her son was overcharged and wrongfully convicted by a prosecutorial team operating without meaningful oversight. She frames both situations as evidence of a single systemic problem: a justice system that protects defendants with political connections and the money to hire elite attorneys, while crushing ordinary people who have neither.

"As an independent thinker, I have always evaluated people by their merit, not their connections," Evelyn Castillo-Bach said. "A prosecutor who lets a billionaire predator walk free because of his connections should face the same scrutiny as a prosecutor who hides evidence to win a conviction against someone with no power and no money. Florida needs a governor who has seen this system from the inside and will not accept that any family is disposable."

Evelyn Castillo-Bach brings nearly twenty-five years of experience monitoring the Florida Department of Corrections, which the agency itself identifies as the largest state agency in Florida. The department operates with a budget of \$3.8 billion for fiscal year 2024-25 and employs nearly 24,000 staff members statewide. As Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network, an organization focused on criminal justice reform and prosecutorial accountability, she has tracked agency spending, infrastructure failures and staffing crises. The department operates 143 facilities statewide with approximately 88,000 incarcerated individuals and over 145,000 offenders under community supervision. Capital repair needs are estimated between \$6 billion and \$12 billion, with only 153 of 639 housing units equipped with air conditioning.

The candidate's campaign platform includes increasing pay for prosecutors and public defenders and mandating strong ethical standards for both. She argues that Florida cannot achieve public safety when the professionals administering justice are underpaid, overworked and operating without adequate oversight.

Florida ranks among the states with the highest incarceration rates in the nation ([Prison Policy Initiative](#), 2024). The Florida Department of Corrections now operates at a \$189 million deficit due to chronic understaffing and overtime costs ([Florida Policy Institute](#), August 2025). "This is not public safety. It is a machine that runs on bodies, vendors, and budgets. It is not sustainable," says Evelyn Castillo-Bach.

Additionally, she emphasizes her position is not about leniency but about a balanced application of law. She supports second chances. But she also wants career criminals who game the system to face tough consequences.

Evelyn Castillo-Bach presents her criminal justice reform proposals as an important component of her gubernatorial platform. She has observed and studied the Florida Department of Corrections for nearly twenty-five years and as Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network has learned firsthand the difficulties correctional officers face, the tools they lack and the salaries they deserve. She maintains incarcerated veterans suffering from service-related trauma leading to criminal acts belong in medical facilities with psychological help, not in prison where their conditions worsen and where they face abandonment. "We need to honor our wounded warriors with action," says the woman focused on becoming the next Governor of Florida, Evelyn Castillo-Bach.

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Campaign contact information and additional policy details are available at evelynforgovernor.org.

About Evelyn Castillo-Bach:

A candidate for Florida Governor in 2026. She has been an Independent voter for most of her adult life and is running as a Democrat. She has been a homeowner in Pembroke Pines since 1998 and serves as Executive Director of Balanced Justice Network, an organization focused on criminal justice reform and prosecutorial accountability. Her campaign motto is "People First, Not Politics," with a focus on Health, Home, Freedom. She describes herself as an Independent Democrat.

Evelyn Castillo-Bach Campaign For Governor of Florida 2026

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