June 10, 2013

**PRESS RELEASE**

District Attorney Mike O’Dell

Joins the Republican Party

I am pleased to announce that I have made the transition to the Republican Party. I recently met with the Executive Committee and shared my philosophy and my beliefs, and concluded that I was much more aligned with the positions of the Republican Party.

Although my party affiliation is changing, ***I am not***. I will continue to be the same person I have

been over all my years of service in the District Attorney’s Office. *So why make this transition?*

As I said, I have not changed, but the ***national*** Democrat Party certainly has. It is no longer the

Democrat Party of my father or my grandfather. It has changed dramatically on important social,

moral, and fiscal issues, becoming far too liberal for my conscience. But my conflict is with the

national party, not the *local folks* who call themselves democrats. I have enjoyed a deep and

abiding relationship with the many dear and wonderful Democrat friends I have made over the

past 35 years. They are giving, caring individuals for whom I have the utmost respect. It is my

hope that these great folks will continue to be my friends despite my party switch. They

know my heart—the kind of man I have tried to be over these past 3 decades of public service.

They have seen that I have always striven to put the people first, to serve with

integrity, and to give my very best in the representation of the citizens of Dekalb and Cherokee

Counties as the chief law enforcement officer of this circuit.

**A**s an elected official, I believe it is important for *me* to stand up for what I believe. I have always considered myself a conservative Christian, then a public servant. Politics have *never* played a role in how I, or my staff, have conducted the people’s business. My transition to the Republican Party is not a political move, but a *personal* decision based on my beliefs.These values and beliefs clearly supersede any, and all, political considerations, but I have found that they are welcomed in the Republican Party, and I have been overwhelmed by the warm response I have received from local Republicans.

I have been blessed in having many close friends and supporters in both political parties. I was appointed to the Office of District Attorney in 1996 by Fob James, a Republican Governor, despite the fact I was a democrat. He told me he made the decision based on my qualifications, not on my political affiliation. I am proud of the fact that a great deal of my support for that original appointment came from many Republican friends and supporters in the form of phone calls and letters to Governor James.

This move will not change my mission as District Attorney. I will continue to give my utmost in the pursuit of truth and justice, and to make Dekalb and Cherokee counties safer for all our citizens. I will also continue to insure that politics plays no part in this effort.

**I** have always believed that if you worked hard, did your best, and treated everyone equally and fairly—with dignity and respect—people from all political persuasions would support you despite your party affiliation. Dekalb and Cherokee voters are known for their *independence*, and for voting for the man or woman they believe to be best for the job. My goal is to continue to be that man, and to give the citizens of the Ninth Judicial Circuit good reasons to continue their support of me as their District Attorney.

I want to thank my many Republican friends, old and new, for their willingness to embrace me as one of their own. It is an honor and a privilege to accept their invitation to join the Republican Party.