

September 21, 2016

The Honorable Curt Clawson  
Member of Congress  
228 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Clawson:

On behalf of the Village of Estero, I would like to thank you for your leadership and action to address damaging discharges from Lake Okeechobee which have led to the spread of toxic algal blooms in Florida. We are especially grateful for your bipartisan work to introduce legislation to resolve this matter and to provide resources to prevent future similar environmental disasters and protect Florida's fragile ecology.

We are supportive of and eager to help you advance the following key pieces of legislation that you have introduced to protect our state's water and wildlife:

- H.R. 4667 – To Direct the Secretary of the Army to Expedite the Completion of Repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike, Florida, and for other Purposes, which would provide \$800 million of emergency funding to expedite repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike and requires completion of this critical project by December 31, 2020, four to six years ahead of current schedules.
- H.R. 4793 – Everglades Land Acquisition Act of 2016, which would set aside \$500 million for the Department of the Interior to purchase land south of Lake Okeechobee.

Southwest Florida's marine life and economy are suffering due to these discharges and your leadership in this effort is appreciated. If there is anything we can do to assist in moving this legislation forward, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Batos, Mayor  
Village of Estero

September 21, 2016

Senator Bill Nelson  
United States Senate  
2000 Main Street #801  
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dear Senator Nelson:

On behalf of the Village of Estero, I would like to thank you for your leadership and action to address damaging discharges from Lake Okeechobee which have led to the spread of toxic algal blooms in Florida. We are especially grateful for your bipartisan work to introduce legislation to resolve this matter and to provide resources to prevent future similar environmental disasters and protect Florida's fragile ecology.

We are supportive of and eager to help you advance the **Everglades for the Next Generation Act**, which amends the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 to provide for expedited project implementation relating to the comprehensive Everglades restoration plan.

We urge you to continue your support of the Southwest Florida environment by consideration of advancing related Senate Bills for other legislation that is currently being proposed in the House of Representatives, including:

- H.R. 4793 - Everglades Land Acquisition Act of 2016, which would set aside \$500 million for the Department of the Interior to purchase land south of Lake Okeechobee.

This bill will assist with the purchase of needed lands to recreate a flow-way from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades. Many experts agree that additional storage, filtration, and a flow-way south of the lake are critical to move clean naturally filtered fresh water to the Everglades and Florida Bay, instead of dumping nutrient laden waters to the fragile estuaries and coastal regions.

- H.R. 5870 - Federal Partnership for Clean Water Land Acquisition Act of 2016, which creates a grant program to help states pay for up to 50 percent of the cost of land purchases to improve water quality and authorizes \$750 million per year to fund the program.

This bill will assist with the acquisition of critical areas which can be utilized to treat water and prevent additional pollutants from being created.

Southwest Florida's marine life and economy are suffering due to these discharges and your leadership in this effort is appreciated. If there is anything we can do to assist in moving this legislation forward, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Batos, Mayor  
Village of Estero