

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. President:

In your address to a joint session of Congress, you called for bolstering our nation's infrastructure. Florida's Congressional Delegation has been working in a bipartisan manner for years on the largest hydrologic infrastructure project in American history – restoring America's Everglades. We urge you to join our efforts to expedite and energize the federal government's role in this critical mission. Specifically, we ask you to convene an "Everglades Restoration Infrastructure Taskforce" to develop an action plan to secure new infrastructure funding and accelerate project completion to meet or beat the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' current Integrated Delivery Schedule timeline.

The bipartisan Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), authorized by Congress in 2000, is one of the most ambitious ecological restoration projects ever undertaken. Beyond restoring the unique Everglades ecosystem, CERP would improve vital flood protection for neighboring communities, protect the main source of drinking water for 8 million South Floridians, and enhance the Everglades' substantial \$2 trillion economic impact in the state. Working together, the State of Florida, the Army Corps, and other federal agency partners have made important—but incremental—progress towards meeting the Plan's Integrated Delivery Schedule roadmap of completing over 60 proposed projects over a 30-year period.

More must be done, however, as many projects are still awaiting construction, and delays could threaten to increase project completion costs. Along with finishing interrelated projects like the Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation and Kissimmee River Restoration, incomplete CERP projects such as Indian River Lagoon-South (C-44, C-23, C-24 & C-25), the Caloosahatchee River (C-43) West Basin Storage Reservoir, and other additional water storage reservoirs, as well as the newly authorized Central Everglades Project, are critical to halting damaging water releases from Lake Okeechobee into surrounding coastal estuaries where harmful algae blooms threaten human health, wildlife, and important fisheries, and dramatically impact local economies through downturns in tourism and the real estate market.

Floridians have worked toward the goal of a restored Everglades since Marjory Stoneman Douglas penned "The Everglades: River of Grass," and after years of scientific study and intergovernmental and interagency cooperation, we have a comprehensive series of flood control

and ecosystem restoration infrastructure proposals to achieve that dream through CERP and related non-CERP and Foundation projects. Directing just a fraction of the \$1 trillion investment of which you spoke could fully fund the construction of these outstanding projects and save one of our nation's most iconic landscapes while also yielding the economic and job benefits the American people expect and deserve.

Once again, we urge you to expedite and energize the federal government's efforts to restore the Everglades and create an "Everglades Restoration Infrastructure Taskforce" charged with developing an action plan to secure new infrastructure funding and accelerate project completion to meet or beat the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' current Integrated Delivery Schedule timeline.

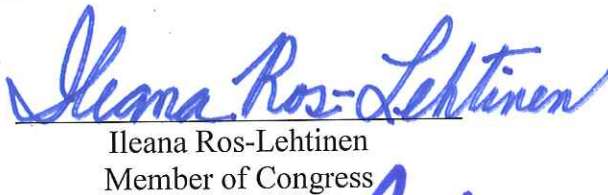
Sincerely,



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



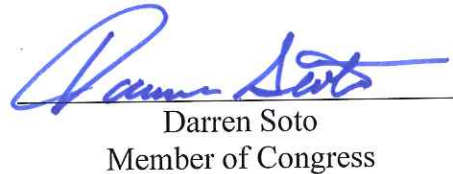
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



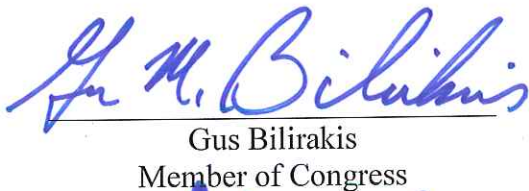
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



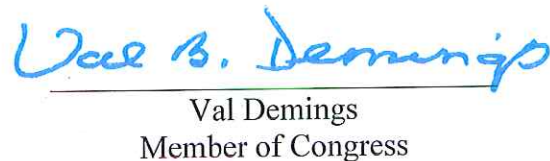
Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



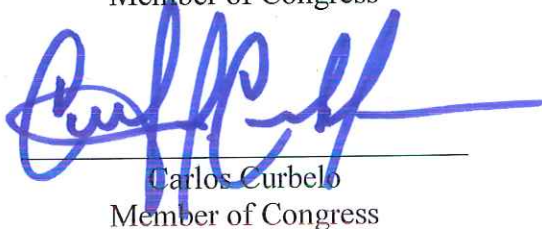
Darren Soto
Member of Congress



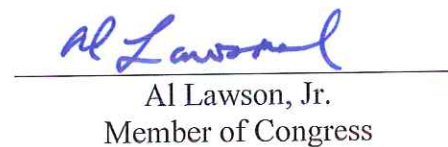
Gus Bilirakis
Member of Congress



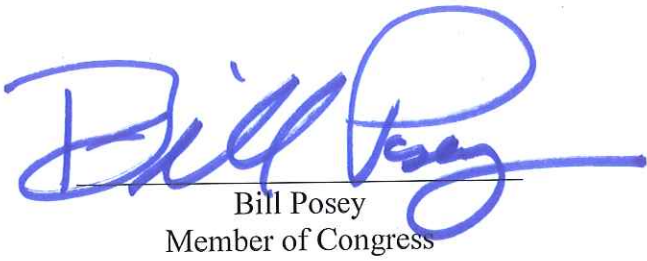
Val Demings
Member of Congress



Carlos Curbelo
Member of Congress



Al Lawson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



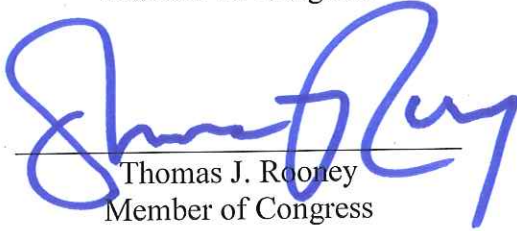
John H. Rutherford
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Daniel Webster
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Thomas J. Rooney
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Vern Buchanan
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Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.
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CC:

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