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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Washington, DC 20515-0918

July 26, 2013

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The Honorable Rick Scott  
Governor, State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott:

As you know, there is a serious public health and environmental crisis occurring in the St. Lucie River that is dramatically effecting the population, ecology and economy of the area. The river is currently at unprecedented levels of bacteria, so much so that Martin County health officials have told the public to avoid contact with the water. Beyond the serious risks to public health, this polluted water is causing an economic downturn in an area where water-related business generates \$840 million annually. Further, the levels of fertilizer pollutants are causing serious algae blooms, and salinity levels are far beyond dangerous levels for the survival of important species.

The situation in the St. Lucie River and the Estuary is the result of many factors, including those at the local, state and federal level. While the Army Corps of Engineers maintains Lake Okeechobee and manages the releases of the lake into the river to ensure the Herbert Hoover Dike is not breached to avoid serious flooding and damage, the South Florida Water Management District handles many projects along with the Corps that are critical to regional water quality levels, including the C-44 reservoir project and other Everglades restoration projects. These projects will provide relief to the lake and the St. Lucie by allowing for more water to flow south and to help improve water quality throughout the region. The District is also responsible for decisions to pump water into Lake Okeechobee from the Everglades Agricultural Area during heavy rain periods.

Further, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for enforcing state water quality standards on our area waterways. This agency plays a crucial role in ensuring water is safe not only for the local population but for local ecological conditions which are especially crucial in the Indian River Lagoon, the most diverse ecosystem in North America.

These state level entities play pivotal roles in the fight to ensure that the St. Lucie no longer causes public health threats and dramatic environmental degradation to the area. Government

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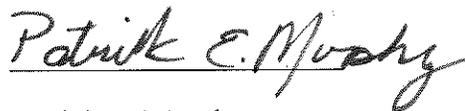
officials and experts from the federal, state and local levels must work together to address the various issues contributing to the dire situation in the St. Lucie. There is no action too big or small to be considered to save our waters, and no one, especially government officials, can say that this isn't their problem.

On the federal level, I have been fighting in Congress since day one to push the Army Corps to address the dire situation created in our district. I have also been advocating for funding for important local projects including Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan projects and the local C-44 reservoir project. Further, I have been working to support water storage and conservation approaches that will reduce the polluted water burden on Lake Okeechobee on the federal level, and continue to meet with local leaders, scientists, stakeholders and entrepreneurs to put everything on the table of how we can work together to promote the health of local waterways and improve the overall water quality in the region.

Working on every angle of this issue is the only approach that will lead to a solution to this problem that has been suffered for far too long by the local communities surrounding the St. Lucie River and Estuary. That is why I invite you to Washington DC to join me in meeting with Army Corps officials to discuss both the state and federal roles in solving this problem.

I look forward to working with your office toward solutions with you to this serious issue.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick E. Murphy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Patrick E. Murphy  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

CC: Secretary Herschel Vineyard, Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Ernie Barnett, Acting Director, South Florida Water Management District