



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

Washington, DC 20515

February 04, 2016

The Honorable Shaun Donovan  
Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Executive Office of the President  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Donovan:

As you complete the President's fiscal year 2017 budget request, we write to express our support for fully funding Everglades restoration projects. The Everglades are America's iconic wetland, a major national park, and an important job-creator in Florida.

The President's FY 16 budget request followed through on his commitment to restoring the Everglades, proposing \$240 million to continue the ongoing efforts. Since then, President Obama visited the Everglades and saw firsthand their natural beauty and the urgent need to protect and restore this national treasure. Further compounding the urgency, Florida's dry season has been soaked by El Niño-fueled rainfall, threatening a repeat of the "lost summer" of 2013 when harmful freshwater discharges from Lake Okeechobee inundated the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers. These discharges devastated the ecology and economy of the Treasure Coast and Southwest Florida and crippled the Indian River Lagoon, our nation's most biodiverse estuary.

The Army Corps of Engineers Everglades projects, including Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects, provide a fiscally appropriate investment to continue restoring the historic River of Grass, while mitigating the damage done by our current water management infrastructure. Furthermore, these projects support thousands of jobs, alleviate flooding in coastal areas, and protect the water supply in South Florida. According to a Mather Economics study, every dollar spent on Everglades restoration generates a four dollar return on investment. Altogether, economists estimate these projects have created approximately 442,644 jobs over 50 years. Strong funding for these projects will ensure construction of ecosystem restoration projects continues on a timely basis. Without the continued support from the Administration and commitment of robust federal funding, the ecosystem will decline further and ultimately raise the total cost of restoration in the long run.

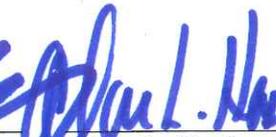
As Marjory Stoneman Douglas notes, "there are no other Everglades in the world." We remain steadfast in our pursuit of seeing Everglades restoration projects through to completion. Full

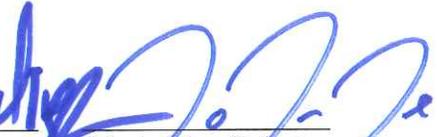
funding for Everglades restoration projects in the FY17 budget request is an important step in that direction. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

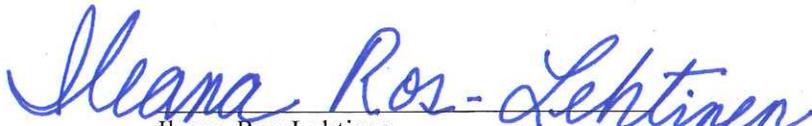
Sincerely,

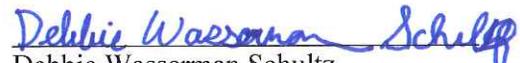
  
Patrick E. Murphy  
Member of Congress

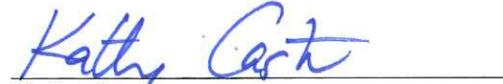
  
Curt Clawson  
Member of Congress

  
Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

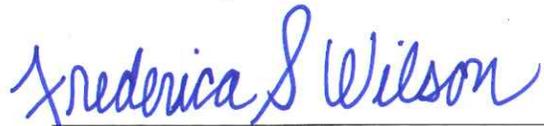
  
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