

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2008

The Honorable Marco Rubio
The Capitol, Suite 420
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

The Honorable Stan Mayfield
The Capitol, Suite 222
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

The Honorable Ray Sansom
The Capitol, Suite 418
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Sirs:

We write to you today in the spirit of bipartisanship to urge the State of Florida to protect the historic state/federal partnership to restore the Everglades.

Earlier this week, the Florida State House appears to have tried to eliminate Everglades funding, totaling \$400 million, from Florida's budget. In fact, the Florida House Environment and Natural Resources Council unveiled their recommendations which did not include any funding for Florida Forever land acquisition or Everglades restoration.

The state and federal partnership to restore the Everglades is one of the most important environmental and economic initiatives ever undertaken. In the eight years of this historic agreement, the State of Florida has consistently met its commitment. While the federal government has not provided adequate funding during this time, Florida's Congressional Delegation has been outspoken in support of both the partnership and increased federal funding. We believe that if the State of Florida now chooses to stop funding its share of this historic agreement, it will undermine the ability to secure federal funding now and in the future.

At a time when the Chairman of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee is visiting key Everglades' projects and reaffirming Congress' commitment to restoring the Everglades, it would be counterproductive for the Florida House to cut the entire Everglades budget. In recent

months, Congress has stepped up its commitment to this historic restoration effort by passing the first Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) in seven years, and has also authorized funding for crucial Everglades projects. Now is the time for the State Legislature and the U.S. Congress to work together to ensure these funds are appropriated so that restoration can continue and succeed.

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), passed by Congress in 2000, committed the State of Florida and the Federal government to a long-term partnership in Everglades restoration. It's vital that this partnership remains in tact.

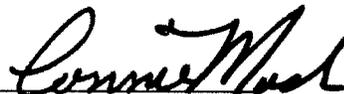
We urge you to join our bipartisan effort, and work with us to secure the critical state and federal funding to make sure we protect and restore the Everglades for future generations.

Sincerely,

Tim Mahoney
Member of Congress

Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress

Ron Klein
Member of Congress



Connie Mack
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

Robert Wexler
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Charlie Crist
CC: The Honorable Ken Pruitt