

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 1, 2019

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water  
Development and Related Agencies  
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water  
Development and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20151

Dear Chairwoman Kaptur and Ranking Member Simpson:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2020 Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we strongly urge you to provide the highest possible funding levels for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work on Everglades restoration, and \$200M in the USACE Construction account for Additional Funding for Environmental Restoration or Compliance where SFER could compete for additional funding. Adequately funding these programs and projects will continue the recent momentum we have seen in achieving the decades long goal of Everglades restoration.

The Everglades is the drinking water source for one in three Floridians and a source of jobs and economic livelihood for hundreds of thousands more. Restoring America's Everglades is not a choice between fiscal responsibility and environmental protection. In fact, it is both. Restoration encompasses exactly the kind of "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects that will help our economy. The chance to preserve this national treasure while putting in place the tools for long-term economic prosperity is an opportunity we cannot let slip by.


With the recent passage of the *Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA)* of 2018, legislation passed to specifically address the country's water resource needs, funding for these projects could not come at a more critical time. Notably for Florida, WRDA authorized the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir, a key component of the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem. With the authorization of EAA, along with the continued work on the overarching Central Everglades Restoration Project (CERP) which was authorized back in 2000, adequate funding and authorizations for new projects are needed to continue to build on this momentum.


There is little question that restoration of America's Everglades is necessary. The bridges and canals built decades ago to "tame" the River of Grass threaten a treasured ecosystem that impacts our way of life. Billions of gallons of water that help prevent salt water impingement are needed for the Everglades National Park, but instead are washed into the sea through discharges from Lake Okeechobee and an elaborate canal system that severely damages fragile coastal estuaries. This polluted water strains our fishing and tourism businesses, as well as poses a danger to public health.


As you know, this year's funding request is part of a multi-year effort to provide the necessary resources to preserve one of the great ecological treasures in our nation and to specifically move forward on construction projects that will help alleviate decades old flawed engineering. We have a responsibility to preserve this unique gift for future generations. Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.


Sincerely,

  
Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

  
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell  
Member of Congress

  
Francis Rooney  
Member of Congress

  
Brian Mast  
Member of Congress

  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress

  
Bill Posey  
Member of Congress

  
Al Lawson  
Member of Congress

  
Darren Soto  
Member of Congress


  
Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress

  
Val Demings  
Member of Congress

  
Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

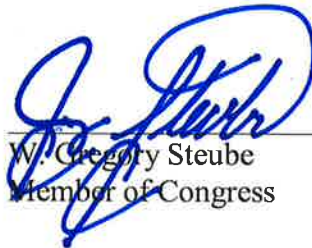
  
Donna Shalala  
Member of Congress

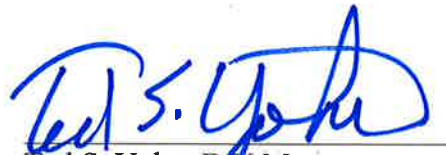
  
Stephanie Murphy  
Member of Congress

  
Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress

  
Michael Waltz  
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Charlie Crist  
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W. Gregory Steube  
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Ted S. Yoho; D.V.M.  
Member of Congress

  
Vern Buchanan  
Member of Congress

  
Matt Gaetz  
Member of Congress