

Congressional Delegation Criticizes Florida State Legislature's Proposal to Cut Everglades Funding

March 28, 2008

Washington, D.C. – Today, South Florida Congressional Democrats **Alcee L. Hastings (Miramar), Robert Wexler (Delray Beach), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (Weston), Kendrick B. Meek (Miami) and Ron Klein (Boca Raton)** strongly criticized a proposal by the Republican-led Florida State House of Representatives to eliminate Everglades funding and by the Florida State Senate to cut funding in the State's budget by \$400 million and \$100 million respectively. On Wednesday, 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. Yesterday, the Senate Appropriations Committee released their budget recommendation which did not include \$100 million for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

“At a time when the United States House of Representatives Appropriations Committee Chairman is visiting key Everglades projects and reaffirming Congress' commitment to restoring the Everglades, it is reprehensible that the Florida House would propose slashing the entire Everglades budget. This new Congress has stepped up its commitment to the historic restoration effort by passing the first Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) in 7 years and funding crucial Everglades projects. The Florida House and Senate recommendations to cut \$400 million and \$100 million, respectively, in vital Everglades funding are shocking and irresponsible acts which completely fly in the face of the State-Federal Everglades restoration partnership. We urge the Florida Legislature to restore these crucial dollars during Conference and for Governor Crist to refuse to sign any bill that does not include Everglades restoration funding.”

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) passed by Congress in 2000, committed the State of Florida and the Federal government to become equal partners in Everglades restoration efforts.

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