



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

July 12, 2016

The Honorable Vern Buchanan  
Co-Chairman, The Florida Delegation  
United States House of Representatives  
2104 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Alcee Hastings  
Co-Chairman, The Florida Delegation  
United States House of Representatives  
2353 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Buchanan and Chairman Hastings:

This summer, our state is facing an alarming number of algal blooms that are threatening our waterways, wildlife, and communities in South Florida. Once again, the State of Florida has risen to the challenge of protecting our beautiful home because the federal government has not provided the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers the funding needed to maintain and repair the Herbert Hoover Dike. I recently declared a state of emergency in Martin, St. Lucie, Lee and Palm Beach Counties to expedite water storage projects, projects and enhance algal bloom response efforts. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the Florida Department of Health (DOH), and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) have been tirelessly working together to gather information and assist families, businesses and visitors.

Last week, I requested that President Barack Obama declare a federal emergency and use the full resources of the federal government to eliminate the public health and safety threats associated with the unnatural discharge of nutrient-laden freshwater from Lake Okeechobee into the canals that flow east into the Indian River Lagoon and west into the Caloosahatchee River. I hope you will help convey the emergency our state is facing to help get it approved.

I have also continued to ask President Obama to maintain and repair the federally operated Herbert Hoover Dike, which is the sole responsibility of the federal government. However, these calls have been ignored and our state has been forced to defend our priceless natural treasures and extraordinary coastal communities without the federal government living up to their obligations. Time and time again, the State of Florida has stepped up to invest in important restoration projects while the federal government has continued to fall short and not fund the maintenance and repair of the dike they are solely responsible for.

Florida has invested more than \$688 million in Everglades restoration over the past five years and will continue to invest up to \$200 million a year under the Legacy Florida bill which I signed into law this year. Our state has specifically obligated \$150 million for the C-43 reservoir, \$401 million for the C-44 reservoir, and \$90 million for the Tamiami Trail bridging project- all of which are key projects to providing relief to the coastal estuaries from harmful Lake Okeechobee discharges and sending clean water south into the Everglades. The State of Florida has invested nearly \$2 billion in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and \$1.8 billion in providing clean water to the Everglades. To date, the federal government is \$880 million behind in its share of CERP funding. While these state investments are critical in our

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goal of improving water quality, there is now an overwhelming need for the federal government to finally take action and uphold their responsibilities.

Florida is without a doubt the most beautiful state in the country with some of the world's most incredible natural treasures. We need your help in protecting these natural treasures and the millions of Florida families who are being impacted by potentially harmful algal blooms. Please utilize your position in Congress to take immediate action by working to ensure Florida receives the federal emergency declaration and that the federal government fund the maintenance and repair to the federally operated Herbert Hoover Dike. These repairs would safely hold water to prevent unnatural Lake Okeechobee discharges that are leading to the increased formation of algae.

As you return to Washington D.C. this week, I hope that you will do all you can to ask President Obama to accept our request for a federal emergency declaration and provide crucial funding to maintain and repair the dike to protect Florida's waterways.

Please let me know what I can do to assist you in your efforts in Washington to secure funding to maintain and repair the Herbert Hoover Dike and please keep me updated on any progress you make on this important topic.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott  
Governor

cc:

Senator Bill Nelson  
Senator Marco Rubio  
Congressman Gus Bilirakis  
Congresswoman Corrine Brown  
Congresswoman Kathy Castor  
Congressman Curt Clawson  
Congressman Ander Crenshaw  
Congressman Carlos Curbelo  
Congressman Ron DeSantis  
Congressman Ted Deutch  
Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart  
Congresswoman Lois Frankel  
Congresswoman Gwen Graham  
Congressman Alan Grayson

Congressman David Jolly  
Congressman John Mica  
Congressman Jeff Miller  
Congressman Patrick Murphy  
Congressman Richard Nugent  
Congressman Bill Posey  
Congressman Tom Rooney  
Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Congressman Dennis Ross  
Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Congressman Daniel Webster  
Congresswoman Frederica Wilson  
Congressman Ted Yoho