



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

August 20, 2018

Mr. Ashley Bell, Esquire  
Regional Administrator, Region IV  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
101 Marietta Street, NW, Suite 700  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Re: Request for SBA Economic Injury Disaster Declaration for Lee and Martin Counties,  
Florida

Dear Mr. Bell:

Increased discharges from Lake Okeechobee by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in June and July 2018 have resulted in widespread, harmful algal blooms in the Caloosahatchee River, St. Lucie River, Indian River Lagoon, and associated estuaries. In response to these toxic algal blooms, I declared a State of Emergency on July 9, 2018, through Executive Order Number 2018-191 for the following Florida counties: Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie.

The algal blooms caused by those increased discharges from Lake Okeechobee have resulted in significant economic injury to Florida business owners in the affected areas. According to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Lee County reports nearly \$7,000,000.00 in economic injury for approximately 84 businesses; additionally, Martin County reports more than \$295,000.00 in economic injury for approximately 11 businesses.

Pursuant to 13 C.F.R. §123.3, I request the Small Business Administration (SBA) issue an Economic Injury Disaster Declaration for Lee and Martin Counties. This request is timely under 13 C.F.R. §123.3(a)(3)(iii). I certify that Lee and Martin Counties meet the threshold for a SBA Economic Injury Disaster Declaration, and I request the SBA move quickly to offer low-interest loans so that Florida businesses can recover from the ongoing economic injury caused by the toxic algal blooms.

The results of the economic injury assessment attached to this letter clearly support this request for Lee and Martin Counties, and it is reasonable to believe that additional counties may be submitted for consideration in the near future. Florida is not seeking Individual Assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency through a Presidential declaration regarding this event.

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Thank you for your prompt consideration in this matter. If additional information is required to assist in your determination, please contact Caroline Edwards, Bureau Chief of Recovery, Florida Division of Emergency Management, at (850) 879-4082.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized flourish at the beginning.

Rick Scott  
Governor

cc: Wesley Maul, Director  
Florida Division of Emergency Management

**Rick Scott**  
GOVERNOR



**Cissy Proctor**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

August 20, 2018

Mr. Mark Kruse  
Executive Office of the Governor  
The Capitol, Suite PL05  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Business Survey from Algal Blooms

Dear Mr. Kruse:

On July 9, 2018, Governor Scott issued Executive Order 18-191 declaring a state of emergency in Glades, Hendry, Lee, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties as a result of algal blooms caused by the harmful federal water releases from Lake Okeechobee. Under the direction the Governor, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity opened the Business Damage Assessment Survey to evaluate the impacts of the algal bloom on local businesses. Survey results are self-reported by impacted businesses.

As reported to date:

**Lee County**

- 89 businesses have completed the Business Damage Assessment Survey.
- 84 businesses suffered economic loss as a result of the algal bloom.
- The total loss estimated by these businesses is \$6,939,207.02.
- 27 of the businesses indicated both temporary and permanent employee lay-offs, with an estimated total of 73 jobs lost.

**Martin County**

- 14 businesses have completed the Business Damage Assessment Survey.
- 11 businesses suffered economic loss as a result of the algal bloom.
- The total loss estimated by these businesses is \$295,000.00.
- 3 of the businesses indicated both temporary and permanent employee lay-offs, with an estimated total of 6 jobs lost.

Using the survey results, DEO estimates significant economic impact to Lee and Martin counties resulting from the algal bloom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cissy Proctor", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cissy Proctor

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity | Caldwell Building | 107 E. Madison Street | Tallahassee, FL 32399  
850.245.7105 | [www.FloridaJobs.org](http://www.FloridaJobs.org)  
[www.twitter.com/FLDEO](https://www.twitter.com/FLDEO) | [www.facebook.com/FLDEO](https://www.facebook.com/FLDEO)

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