

BRIAN J. MAST
18TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

2182 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3026

171 SW FLAGLER AVENUE
STUART, FLORIDA 34994
(772) 781-3266

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0918

February 4, 2022

President Joe Biden
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

As members of the Florida delegation, we write to request that your FY23 budget request include a minimum of \$725 million in South Florida Ecosystem Restoration funding.

Unfortunately, last year, your request of \$350 million for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) fell short of what is needed to complete Everglades restoration on schedule. While it was suggested that funding from the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA) could help make up the difference, we were greatly disappointed by the exclusion of funding for the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir in that bill. This project is the most critical component of CERP because it will allow more water to be sent south into the Everglades and drastically reduce toxic discharges to Florida's east and west coasts.

In fact, the EAA Reservoir's completion date has now been pushed back from 2028 to 2030, and without IIJA funding or ample FY23 funding, it will certainly slip farther behind schedule. Your FY23 budget request is, therefore, an opportunity to right this wrong by requesting robust overall funding for Everglades restoration, including sufficient funding to restore the EAA reservoir to its original completion date.

The Florida Everglades is a world-renowned, one-of-a-kind ecosystem that makes South Florida one of the most biologically diverse regions of the world. Not only does the Greater Everglades ecosystem provide natural beauty, but it provides water supply and natural flood protection for the communities that call the region home. Restoration of this treasure is non-negotiable, and as Governor DeSantis has proven, rapid progress is possible when leaders commit to getting it done with the necessary financial investment.

We are committed to working with you to ensure the beauty of the Everglades is preserved for future generations, so thank you in advance for ensuring that your stated commitment to the Everglades is backed up by action.

Sincerely,



Brian Mast
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Scott Franklin
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress



John H. Rutherford
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress



Carlos Gimenez
Member of Congress



Byron Donalds
Member of Congress



Daniel Webster
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



Greg Steube
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Waltz". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Michael Waltz
Member of Congress