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Senator Rob Bradley
414 Senate Office Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Senator Bradley,

Audubon Florida has supported and advocated SB 10 to our members, the public and legislators. The bill promises to reduce discharges to coastal estuaries by storing and conveying water from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades.

The March 9 committee amendment to SB 10 brought in some issues beyond the original scope of the bill. With this letter we ask for additional changes to the bill addressing four specific issues:

Sections 3 and 4 of the committee amendment create new bonding authority for water resource protection and development and reduce the limit on Florida Forever bonds. While we recognize the need and appropriateness of bonding for water resource protection, we request that the limit on Florida Forever bonds be restored to the \$3 billion in place when the program was created. We also recommend changing the limit on water resource bonds to \$2.3 billion.

Section 6 of the committee amendment has findings language that is correct in describing the need for spending state funds on water resource protection but errs in the assertion that, "There is a need to change the focus and direction of the state's major land acquisition programs and to shift funding and bonding capabilities from land acquisition for conservation purposes..." The actual benefits of land conservation disprove the finding. We ask that you modify the paragraph to read, "There is a need to provide additional funding and bonding capability for land acquisition and improvements to land and water areas to protect, restore and develop water resources."

Section 8 of the committee amendment adds to the allocation of the voter approved LTF. New language in the section references additional projects from the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and includes the C-111 South Dade project. While a good project, it is not part of CERP. We recommended deleting the reference.

Section 8 also allocates funds for septic to sewer conversion. While reducing pollution from onsite sewage may be claimed to be found in the 2014 voter approved Amendment 1, septic to sewer should be funded through existing federal, state, local and utility funded water quality programs. We ask that the paragraph be removed from the bill.

The committee amendment broadened support for coastal conservation. Audubon's recommended changes to SB 10 preserve the bill while removing issues that our members have flagged.

To conclude we recommend editing the findings language, changing the bonding caps, removing the C-111 project reference and removing the septic to sewer LTF allocation. We look forward to building support for SB 10, which offers true solutions for Florida's water crises.

Sincerely,

Eric Draper, Executive Director