

October 28, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman  
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol, Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, The Capitol, Washington, D.C. 20510

Sent electronically

CC: Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz; Congresswoman Lois Frankel; Congressman Charlie Crist; Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart; Congressman John Rutherford; Senator Marco Rubio

RE: Everglades restoration funding in FY2020 Energy and Water Bill

Dear Chairs Lowey and Shelby, Vice Chair Leahy, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the Everglades Brewers Council and the thousands of Floridians we collectively serve, we greatly appreciate the committees' long-time support of Everglades restoration. The increasing water challenges we face nationwide today call for significant investment in water infrastructure projects. In Florida specifically, recurrent toxic algal blooms support the need for hefty investment to accelerate the restoration of America's Everglades. **We respectfully ask that you come together to resolve budget issues and ensure passage of a final FY2020 Energy and Water Funding Bill that funds the Army Corps' South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program at \$200 million for construction and \$10 million for operations and maintenance in FY 2020.** Restoring the Everglades is fundamental to protecting South Florida's water supply, and, since beer is 90% water, it is also central to the craft brewing industry.

Florida craft beer is a 3.6 billion dollar industry that continues to exhibit strong growth. A 2019 C+R market research study using data sets from the Brewer's Association found that Florida's industry has experienced a 30% growth in the last four years. The state now has 1.5 breweries per 100,000 residents, with 60+ breweries in South Florida alone. In 2017, Florida's breweries churned out over 1.3 million barrels of beer, a number that continues to rise. Small businesses are important economic engines and community hubs. As members of the small business community, our breweries create job growth, groom entrepreneurs, contribute to local economies, and bring people together.

In order for the craft beer industry to continue to thrive, we need a steadily available source of clean water. The Everglades provides drinking water for one in three Floridians. The wetlands act as kidneys, filtering out impurities in the water, and recharge our aquifers. In the face of sea level rise, which threatens our aquifers with saltwater intrusion, restoring the Everglades is more important than ever. Rising seas must be counterbalanced by well-hydrated aquifers that slow the advance of ocean waters into our freshwater drinking wells.

The Everglades ecosystem offers myriad benefits to our region. It is a critical component of our economy, underpinning our tourism and fishing industries and buoying many others. It bolsters our resilience in the face of extreme weather events, holding floodwaters and reducing storm surge. As South Floridians, our prosperity depends on a healthy and vibrant Everglades ecosystem.

Thank you for the work you have done to protect the Everglades; with this level of funding, restoration projects can be expedited to provide full ecological benefits for our region and full economic benefits for our communities.

Sincerely,

**Ty Ericks**

Co-Owner  
Gulf Stream Brewing Company  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

**Adam Fine**

Owner/Manager/Brewer  
Tarpon River Brewing  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

**Dustin Jeffers**

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**Kyle Jones**

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**Jose Mallea**

President  
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**Dave Mathews**

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**Cheryl McBay**

Owner  
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Islamorada, FL

**Jaime Medina**

Head Brewer and Co-Owner  
Spanish Marie Brewery  
Miami, FL

**Carlos Padron**

Owner  
The Tank Brewing Co.  
Miami, FL

**Allen Steen**

Owner  
Mad Robot Brewing Company  
Boca Raton, FL