

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 6, 2016

Dr. Thomas Frieden  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Frieden:

I write to respectfully request the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) remain vigilant to the State of Florida, which is currently being impacted by a harmful algal bloom (HAB). With a wetter than average winter and spring, discharges from Lake Okeechobee have wreaked havoc on the delicate ecosystems, and have contributed to an outbreak of cyanobacteria, or blue-green algae.

The thick algae, which is putrid smelling, has prompted Governor Rick Scott to declare a state of emergency in four counties. It has been reported that people in and around the blooms are experiencing headaches, respiratory problems, and rashes. While affected beaches have been closed to swimming, I worry for the long term health of people who have come into contact with the algae. Residents, and the tourists who plan to visit the areas, should have the best available advice and science informing them of the potential hazards associated with the HAB. Sadly, this issue has been ongoing for weeks, with no definitive end in sight.

I greatly appreciate your staff's quick response to my office's inquiries into available assistance and programs. I am pleased to hear the CDC is engaged with Florida officials related to this bloom and request that you keep me and my office abreast of any developments in this regard. Should the state request assistance, I respectfully request the CDC deploy the appropriate aid to areas impacted by the HAB. Our first responsibility is to ensure people are protected and well-informed of the potential dangers this HAB presents. I thank you again, and look forward to working with you.

Respectfully,



Marco Rubio  
United States Senator