

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 7, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

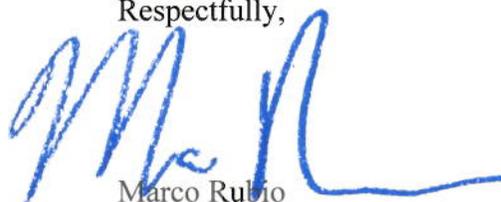
I write in full support of Florida Governor Rick Scott's July 6, 2016 request for a federal emergency declaration in response to the harmful algal blooms in Florida's waters as a result of Lake Okeechobee discharges. After seeing the catastrophic situation firsthand this past Friday, the proposed declaration and the resources that will accompany it are sorely needed.

The algae overgrowth bears a health, ecological and economical emergency. Governor Scott already declared a state of emergency, but more needs to be done. Although the Army Corps of Engineers has decreased the amount of discharges, unfortunately, the end of this problem is nowhere in sight. I remain concerned for the health of residents and visitors, who have reported headaches, respiratory problems and rashes, among other ailments. Additionally, businesses that rely on these waters have also greatly suffered – not only from these harmful algal blooms but also what they have been experiencing all year as a result of the continued discharges from Lake Okeechobee.

I remain committed to working with your administration to ensure that the Herbert Hoover Dike receives the resources necessary to continue with its much needed repairs. I have also been a strong advocate for authorizing the Central Everglades Planning Project, which will help the estuaries by sending more water south, instead of to the east and west. I look forward to the day you can sign this critical project into law, and further strengthen the commitment to protecting our nation's Everglades.

I have witnessed the effects of this disaster and how it has upturned lives, imperiled businesses and has caused serious ecological problems that may last for many years. I know that you recently spent time in this part of Florida and should understand just why it is a special place in our state. I respectfully urge you to promptly approve the request for a federal emergency declaration.

Respectfully,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator