

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 6, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
Majority Whip
S-208, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Majority Whip Cornyn:

As the Congressional calendar continues to dwindle, I respectfully request floor time be given to the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA). While I was pleased to join 29 colleagues last week in supporting floor time be afforded, I must draw your attention to one particular project within the bill that is worthy of immediate consideration: authorization of the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP).

Recently, a harmful algal bloom (HAB) has caused havoc on Florida's Treasure Coast. This was a result, in large part, to constant discharges of water from Lake Okeechobee, which has experienced large amounts of rain. The discharges have pushed billions of gallons of fresh water into the adjoining estuaries. This has lowered the salinity levels, and has contributed to the conditions necessary for the blue-green algae to form and thrive. While visiting with local business owners and residents last week, I was able to witness the deplorable conditions this bloom has caused. It was clear that the federal government must do more. It must finally authorize CEPP, a vital project that when completed, will allow for more water to flow south, through the Everglades, instead of to the east and west.

While I realize the calendar is limited, authorization of CEPP cannot wait. Delays by the Army Corps of Engineers in issuing the final Project Implementation Report is what kept it from enactment through the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014. While we allow this bill to sit idly, unknown damage is being done to Florida's ecology, economy, and to the health of those who come into contact with the HAB. Therefore, I respectfully request WRDA be given floor time immediately to ensure CEPP's authorization can finally be sent to the President for signature.

Respectfully,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator