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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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May 2, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting \$1.8 million for Brevard County, Florida, to reduce nutrient pollution in the Indian River Lagoon Watershed. The project will connect 300 homes to sewer and abandon 300 septic systems that pose the highest threat to Indian River Lagoon water quality in terms of excess nitrogen loading.

The entity to receive funding for this project is Brevard County, Natural Resources Management Department, located at 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Building A – Suite 219, Viera, Florida 32940.

The Indian River Lagoon has been designated as a National Estuary and is federally listed as impaired for excess nitrogen. Septic systems are currently responsible for approximately 20% of the nitrogen pollution load entering the lagoon. Excess nitrogen feeds harmful algal blooms. These blooms manufacture toxins and block light needed by seagrass to survive. Extensive loss of seagrass is responsible for the starvation of hundreds of manatees, an iconic and listed species.

As sea levels rise, groundwater also rises. In low-lying coastal communities, septic drain fields are often only inches above the groundwater, leading to groundwater pollution that travels to open waterbodies. As groundwater rises, groundwater pollution and subsequently, surface water pollution from septic systems increases.

Additionally, the depth of water over seagrass increases. For light to penetrate to the increasing depth of the seagrass beds, water clarity must improve. Healthy seagrass beds make estuaries more resilient to storms, erosion, and sewage overflows. Clean water and healthy seagrass beds are critical to subsistence, fishing for food, and the local economy.

Grants will be offered to those homeowners who connect to existing sewer lines. Costs to connect to sewer and properly abandon conventional septic systems will be covered up to \$12,000 per participating home. The County has tax revenue dedicated for the purposes of meeting their cost sharing requirements.

The project is an appropriate use of Federal funds because it will improve livelihoods, help prevent harmful algal blooms that damage the environment, and make the community more resilient.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for the purposes authorized by the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1381 et seq. and funding from the state clean water revolving fund.

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Posey", is written over the typed name and title.

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress