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8TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

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

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March 24, 2023

Representative Kay Granger
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting \$3,000,000 in funding for the Indian River Lagoon – Grand Canal Environmental Dredging project in fiscal year 2024. The entity to receive funding for this project is Brevard County, located at 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Building A - Suite 219, Viera, FL.

The funding would be used to remove accumulations of decaying mucky sediments from the Grand Canal, located southeast of the Pineda Causeway (SR 404), by implementing environmental dredging. Environmental dredging will reduce annual nitrogen flux, algae blooms, toxic hydrogen sulfide, fish kills, increase oxygen and help to preserve healthy, sediments that promote habitat for marine life.

The Indian River Lagoon has been designated as a National Estuary and is federally listed as impaired for excess nitrogen. Muck deposits are currently smothering approximately 10% of the lagoon bottom. Excess nitrogen is released as muck decays and 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 well as other marine life. This project will reduce nutrient pollution in a major canal connected to the Indian River Lagoon. Environmental dredging will quickly remove decades of excess pollutant loading that has built-up and accumulated in the lagoon. Without dredging, this muck will continue to smother marine life and pollute the water column above as it slowly decays. Muck has been mapped and characterized throughout Brevard. The most harmful areas have been prioritized for environmental dredging.

The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because it will improve livelihoods, prevent harmful algal blooms that cause severe damage to the environment, and make the community more resilient. Also, clean water and healthy seagrass beds are critical to subsistence fishermen and local economy.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by Title VI of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C 1381 et seq.

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". The signature is stylized and written over the printed name and title.

Bill Posey
Member of Congress