April 2, 2014

Office of Attorney General
State of Florida
The Capitol PL-01
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050

RE: Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint Amicus Brief

Dear Attorney General Bondi:

The leadership of six states joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a historic plan to effectively manage under-treated sewage, industrial discharges and, most important, agricultural pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The waters of Florida, and across the country, suffer from similar sources of pollution as Chesapeake Bay – too much nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizer, sewage and animal manure. Algal blooms proliferate; toxic dead zones arise; and waters are rendered unfit for swimming, fishing or drinking. The impacts of this pollution are linked to lost jobs, decreased property values, and diminished quality of life from the Panhandle to the Keys. Nowhere has the extent of this water quality problem in Florida been more apparent than in the Everglades ecosystem in the last 12 months.

If the Everglades is to be restored, we must effectively deal with not only the storage and movement of water through the region but also the quality of that water. Water quality in the Everglades will never be improved if regulated industries do not stop pollution at its source instead of sending it flowing into state waters. The Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Blueprint is helpful as a collaborative process for other states to emulate.

The Everglades is the hallmark of Florida – a unique ecosystem found nowhere else on earth – that provides our state with clean drinking water, incredibly biodiversity, and countless recreational opportunities for Floridians and visitors alike that bolster our tourism economy. We need to do everything possible to protect the waters of the Everglades, including supporting and encouraging fruitful collaboration between the state and the US EPA.

To show the citizens of Florida that you are committed to ensuring Florida's water bodies are clean and healthy, the Everglades Coalition respectfully asks you to reconsider the state's involvement in the American Farm Bureau Federation, Et. Al v. Environmental Protection Agency, (3d. Cir. 2014).
Sincerely,

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cc: Governor Rick Scott
Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam
Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater
U.S. Senator Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator Marco Rubio