



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
Audubon of Florida
Audubon of Southwest Florida
Audubon Society of the Everglades
Broward County Audubon Society
Caloosahatche River Citizens
Association
Clean Water Action
Clean Water Network
Collier County Audubon Society
The Conservancy of Southwest
Florida
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice
Everglades Law Center
The Environmental Coalition
Everglades Coordinating Council
Environment Florida
Florida Defenders of the
Environment
Florida Division of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Florida Keys Chapter of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Florida Keys Environmental Fund
Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida Sierra Club
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of Arthur R. Marshall
Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Everglades
Izaak Walton League of America
Last Stand
League of Woman Voters of Florida
Loxahatchee River Coalition
Mangrove Chapter of the Izaak
Walton League of America
Martin County Conservation
Alliance
National Audubon Society
National Parks Conservation
Association
National Wildlife Federation
Natural Resources Defense Council
The Ocean Conservancy
The Pegasus Foundation
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation
Foundation
Save It Now, Glades!
Sierra Club
Sierra Club Broward Group
Sierra Club Central Florida Group
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group
Sierra Club Miami Group
Tropical Audubon Society
The Urban Environment League
World Wildlife Fund

April 23, 2008

The Honorable Dean Cannon, Chair
House Economic Expansion and Infrastructure Council
The Capitol, Room 422
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

RE: Department of Community Affairs Budget Cuts

Dear Representative Cannon:

On behalf of the Everglades Coalition, we write to express our concern over how some proposed budget cuts will undermine the important work the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) provides for the citizens of Florida. The most recent Senate and House budgets call for the elimination of 17 positions at the DCA. Eight positions would be removed in the Office of the Secretary, eight more in the Division of Community Planning and one in the Division of Housing and Community Development.

Our 49 local, state and national conservation and environmental member organizations are dedicated to full restoration of the greater Everglades ecosystem, from the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes into Lake Okeechobee, through the "River of Grass", out to Florida Bay and the Keys. In 2006, we adopted our "Essentials for Everglades Restoration", which includes the following: *Prevent development that undermines the greater Everglades ecosystem protection and restoration.* This requires ensuring effective growth management and permitting decisions for agricultural land that is important to restoration prevent intensification of use or conversion of land to non-agricultural uses, and acquire adequate amounts of land to avoid expensive remediation by future generations.

In order to achieve this Essential, we must ensure that the 1985 Growth Management Act is properly adhered to and enforced. We are very concerned that the loss of these positions will significantly affect DCA's ability to perform the functions required by the Growth Management Act and reduce its ability to provide needed technical assistance, especially in Florida's rural communities.

www.evergladescoalition.org

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We urge you to restore funding for these 17 positions as you move forward in your budget deliberations and, at the very least, allow DCA to use money in its own budget to fund the eight positions in the Division of Community Planning.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Sara Fain
National Co-Chair



Mark Perry
State Co-Chair

Cc: The Honorable Ken Pruitt, President
The Honorable Marco Rubio, Speaker