

MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA
MONROE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION NO. 021 - 2018

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA SUPPORTING HOUSE BILL 53/SENATE BILL 232 ESTABLISHING THE SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION/PROTECTION AREA; SUPPORTING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TO DEVELOP A MANAGEMENT PLAN; SUPPORTING LEGISLATIVE FUNDING TO STUDY AND MONITOR THE FLORIDA REEF TRACT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, from tourism to marine recreation and sport fishing, coral reefs are an important part of the State of Florida's ocean economy, and play a central role in the economies of Southeast Florida's communities. NOAA suggests that coral reefs in southeast Florida have an asset value of \$8.5 billion, generating \$4.4 billion in local sales, \$2 billion in local income, and 70,400 full and part-time jobs; and

WHEREAS, coral reefs are a significant habitat for fisheries; in the United States, about half of all federally managed fisheries depend on coral reefs. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service estimates the annual commercial value of U.S. fisheries from coral reefs to be over \$100 million. Reef-based recreational fisheries generate over \$100 million annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Reef Tract, nearly 150-miles long and 4-miles wide and stretching from the Dry Tortugas in Monroe County to Martin County, is the world's third-largest barrier reef and the only living coral reef in the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, the Southeast Florida Reef Tract comprises the northern portion, extending from Miami-Dade to Martin Counties; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Keys portion of the Southeast Florida Reef Tract is recognized and protected by management plans of the National Marine Sanctuary, National Parks, and National Wildlife Refuges; however, the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Tract remains unprotected and without a State-adopted management plan addressing its future sustainability; and

WHEREAS, coral reefs are vulnerable to harmful environmental changes, particularly those resulting from human activities, coral cover on many Caribbean reefs has declined up to 80 percent over the past three decades. Southeast Florida's reefs, which are a part of the greater Caribbean/Western Atlantic reef province, are being monitored for diseases, bleaching, and other problems associated with human activities. Monitoring data from the Florida Keys revealed a 44 percent decline in coral cover from 1996-2005; and

WHEREAS, massive, region-wide bleaching events have become more common on the Florida Reef Tract.; since 1987, six extensive coral bleaching events have affected the entire tract. Substantial mass coral mortality occurred during the global bleaching events of 1997/1998 and 2014/2016; and

WHEREAS, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Coral Reef Conservation Program confirmed a significant disease event occurring 2014 to present that has spread quickly and far. In the Fall of 2014, isolated sites with significant coral disease were reported near Key Biscayne in Miami-Dade County, and by Fall 2015, widespread disease was confirmed across approximately 55 linear miles of reef, including locations as far north as Pompano Beach in Broward County and as far south as Biscayne National Park. Disease continued to spread north and south into the Florida Keys throughout 2016, and by summer of 2017, reports of widespread disease were confirmed as far north as St. Lucie Inlet in Martin County and to the southern boundary of the Upper Keys; and

WHEREAS, at the December 12, 2017 meeting of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Committee, it was reported that the Florida Reef Tract coral disease has reached the reefs off of Long Key; and

WHEREAS, Florida Reef Tract disease outbreaks are not unprecedented; this current disease event is unique due to its scale, high infection rate, and rapid spread. The number of coral species affected across such a large portion of the Florida Reef Tract is estimated to have resulted in the mortality of millions of corals; and

WHEREAS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that diseases and diminishing health conditions among corals throughout the Florida Reef Tract have dramatically increased; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2017 the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils jointly passed a resolution which urged the Florida Legislature to enact legislation that would create the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Protection Area and authorize the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to partner with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission to develop a Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Florida Legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund for the Coral Reef Disease Water Quality Monitoring Program; and

WHEREAS, support for HB 53/SB 232 would be consistent with Monroe County's long history of championing protections for the Florida Reef Tract; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA:

Section 1. Endorse and support House Bill 53/Senate Bill 232 that would create the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation/Protection Area.

Section 2. Encourage the Florida Legislature to authorize the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to partner with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to develop a Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Management Plan (Management Plan) that would assist in identifying causes for diseases impacting the Southeast Coral Reef and identify solutions to stop and reverse the impacts from the reef system diseases.

Section 3. Encourage the Florida Legislature to appropriate funding in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's budget request to monitor the Florida Reef Tract.

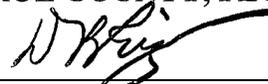
Section 4. Direct the Clerk to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, Senate President, House Speaker, Members of the Monroe County delegation, and the Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

Section 5. This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida, at a regular meeting held on the 17th day of January, 2018.

Mayor David Rice	<u>Yes</u>
Mayor Pro Tem Sylvia Murphy	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner Heather Carruthers	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner Danny Kolhage	<u>Yes</u>
Commissioner George Neugent	<u>Yes</u>

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

BY: 
Mayor David Rice

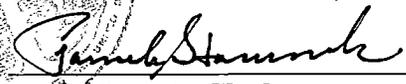
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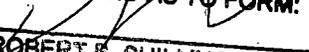
CLERK CIR. CT.
MONROE COUNTY, FL



(SEAL)

ATTEST: KEVIN MADOK, CLERK

By: 
Deputy Clerk

MONROE COUNTY ATTORNEY
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

ROBERT E. SHILLINGER, JR.
COUNTY ATTORNEY
Date 1-9-18



Kevin Madok, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Honorable Senator Bill Nelson
716 Senate Hart Office Building
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Honorable Senator Nelson,

Attached is a copy of Resolution No. 021-2018 supporting House Bill 53/Senate Bill 232 establishing the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation/Protection Area; supporting the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to develop a management plan; supporting legislative funding to study and monitor the Florida Reef Tract; and providing an effective date.

This Resolution was adopted by the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners at a regular meeting, held in formal session, on January 17, 2018. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (305) 292-3550.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Madok, CPA, Clerk of the
Circuit Court and ex-officio to the
Monroe County Board of County
Commissioners

By: Pamela G. Hancock, D.C.

cc: File

KEY WEST
500 Whitehead Street
Key West, Florida 33040
305-294-4641

MARATHON
3117 Overseas Highway
Marathon, Florida 33050
305-289-6027

PLANTATION KEY
88820 Overseas Highway
Plantation Key, Florida 33070
305-852-7145

PK/ROTH BUILDING
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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Honorable Senator Marco Rubio
284 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Honorable Senator Rubio,

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January 22, 2018

Honorable Representative Carlos Curbelo
1404 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Honorable Representative Curbelo,

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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Office of Governor Rick Scott
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399-0001

Honorable Governor Scott,

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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Senate President Joe Negron
305 Senate Office Building
404 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399-1100

Honorable Senator Negron,

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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Senator Anitere Flores
404 Senate Office Building
402 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399-1300

Honorable Representative Flores,

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January 22, 2018

Representative Richard Corcoran
Speaker of the House
420 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399-1300

Honorable Representative Corcoran,

Attached is a copy of Resolution No. 021-2018 supporting House Bill 53/Senate Bill 232 establishing the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation/Protection Area; supporting the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to develop a management plan; supporting legislative funding to study and monitor the Florida Reef Tract; and providing an effective date.

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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Representative Holly Raschein
209 House Office Building
402 S Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32399-1300

Honorable Representative Raschein,

Attached is a copy of Resolution No. 021-2018 supporting House Bill 53/Senate Bill 232 establishing the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation/Protection Area; supporting the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to develop a management plan; supporting legislative funding to study and monitor the Florida Reef Tract; and providing an effective date.

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Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller – Monroe County, Florida

January 22, 2018

Secretary Ryan Matthews
Florida DEP, Office of the Secretary
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee FL 32399

Dear Mr. Matthews,

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