

# County of Monroe

## The Florida Keys



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Mayor David Rice  
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March 10, 2018

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

Dear Senator Rubio:

As Congress begins the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations process, Monroe County would like to express our support for some essential programs to the County that are, once again, targeted for deep cuts or eliminations in the President's FY 2019 budget proposal. Monroe County was pleased with the robust funding levels provided by Congress for these programs in FY 2018, and we encourage you to continue to invest in these programs that are essential to our shared constituents. Of particular concern to Monroe County are the Administration's proposals to:

- Reduce funding for Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) by \$68 million, which would have a detrimental impact on the County. In FY 2017, Monroe received just over \$1.2 million through the PILT program. The County supports maintaining funding at the FY 2018 level of \$530 million.
- Reduce funding to the Army Corps of Engineers Construction account by over \$700 million and reduce funding to the Corps' Investigations account by nearly \$40 million. This funding is crucial to Everglades restoration and the Florida Keys Water Quality Improvement Program (FKWQIP). Additionally, this funding is an investment toward Congress and the Administration's priority of rebuilding the nation's infrastructure. We encourage you to continue the FY 2018 trend of increasing investment for these critical infrastructure accounts.
- Eliminate the NOAA Sea Grant program, detrimentally impacting the condition of our coastline and the health of our marine ecosystem. The County urges you to continue to support this program and maintain funding at the FY 2018 level of \$65 million.
- Eliminate the South Florida Geographic Program, taking further resources away from water quality efforts in South Florida. We support maintaining this funding at the FY 2018 level of \$1.704 million.
- Reduce funding for flood mapping through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) by \$100 million, negatively impacting the ability of the NFIP to produce the accurate maps that are needed to administer the program.

Sen. Rubio  
March 10, 2018  
Page 2

These are just a few of the most critical programs for Monroe County and our residents. We look forward to continuing to work with you to best serve the citizens of Monroe County as you move forward with the appropriations process for FY 2019.

Respectfully,



David Rice, Mayor

CC: Monroe County Commissioners  
County Administrator