

RESOLUTION NO. 084 - 2017

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR THE FLORIDA SEA GRANT COLLEGE THROUGH THE FEDERAL CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAMMATIC BUDGET REQUEST FY18 FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$80 MILLION.**

**WHEREAS**, the National Sea Grant program has 50 years of strong bipartisan support and well-documented tremendous economic benefits to the State of Florida, it leverages a large amount of local, state and private funds and it is a unique program in NOAA in that 95% of the funds appropriated come directly to the states. The work that is done by the Florida Sea Grant is about solving priority problems identified by coastal constituents; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Sea Grant, and the three other Sea Grant programs in the Gulf of Mexico, are leading a multi-year study to conduct an independent assessment of the status of red snapper stocks in the Gulf of Mexico, at the express request of members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, in the 1980's, the Florida Sea Grant pioneered the best management practices for deploying and monitoring artificial reefs and today provides training for artificial reef coordinators in counties and holds the biennial meeting of reef coordinators where new methods, rules and issues are discussed. The economy surrounding artificial reefs, in five counties in Florida alone, exceeds \$250 Million a year and provides several thousand jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida sponge fishery was in serious trouble because environmental groups were lobbying to have it curtailed due to non-sustainable harvesting. UF/IFAS, the Florida Sea Grant researchers and Extension agents worked with the sponge industry to discover a new method to sustainably harvest sponges and taught harvesters how to do it. The work was done in partnership with the industry. As a result, one of the most sustainable fisheries in the nation continues and thrives; and

**WHEREAS**, \$75,000 has been awarded to Monroe County from NOAA through the Sea Grant for the sea level rise modeling; and

**WHEREAS**, \$200,000 from the Florida Sea Grant for sponge restoration research in Monroe County was awarded for FY 2017-18; and

**WHEREAS**, Local Sea Grant funds average \$90,000 - \$110,000 and include funding for one local agent, research projects and specialists. Monroe County and the University of Florida match more than \$500,000 to support Extension services including the Sea Grant; and

**WHEREAS**, the UF-IFAS Monroe County Sea Grant Program partnership was established with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, Old Dominion University and project partners to restore shallow-water sponges in Florida Bay. This large-scale community sponge restoration uses volunteers and scientists to restore more than 15,000 sponges in Florida Bay using a grant of \$379,945; and

**WHEREAS**, the UF-IFAS Monroe County Sea Grant provides the Florida Keys Water Watch Program which includes 355 citizens, students and teachers who have been trained to perform monthly water quality testing for dissolved oxygen, pH, salinity and temperature and enter this data into the Water Quality Database. To date, volunteers are collecting water quality data at 71 sites from Key West to Key Largo, with more than 525 database entries. Grant funding for the program exceeds \$182,000; and

**WHEREAS**, Monroe County benefits from the Sea Grant monitoring, research and education funding and many Sea Grant experts have consulted on County issues; and

**WHEREAS**, the local Sea Grant Agent provides expertise on steering and advisory committees to support water quality such as the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council; and

**WHEREAS**, support from the Florida State and Federal Legislatures to include a programmatic budget request for FY18 funding for the National Sea Grant College Program in the amount of \$80 million dollars would keep the many programs that benefit Monroe County in place;

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

**Section 1.** The Board requests Federal Legislative support for the Florida Sea Grant College through federal congressional programmatic budget requests in FY18 funding for the National Sea Grant College Program in the amount of \$80 million dollars.

**Section 2.** The Board directs the County Administrator to publicize the Board's position on the Florida Sea Grant Program to the general public.

**Section 3.** A copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to Florida Legislators to prompt action with transmittal to be coordinated by Monroe County Extension Services.

**Section 4.** SEVERABILITY. If any portion of this Resolution is determined by any Court to be invalid, the invalid portion shall be stricken, and such striking shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this Resolution. If any Court determines that this Resolution, or any portion hereof, cannot be legally applied to any individual(s), group(s), entity(ies), property(ies), or circumstance(s), such determination shall not affect the applicability hereof to any other individual, group, entity, property, or circumstance.

**Section 5.** EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County, Florida at a regular meeting of said Board held on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2017 in Key Largo, Florida.

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



Attest: Kevin Madok, Clerk

By: Janet Stanworth  
Deputy Clerk

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

By: George R. Neugent  
Mayor

MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
APPROVED AS TO FORM  
Richard J. Minors  
Richard J. Minors  
ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY  
Date: 3/9/17

FILED FOR RECORD  
2017 MAR 17 AM 10:33

CLERK, CIR. CL.  
MONROE COUNTY, FLA