



Everglades Coalition

1000 Friends of Florida
Arthur R. Marshall Foundation
Audubon
Audubon Florida
Audubon of the Everglades
Audubon of Southwest Florida
Audubon of the Western Everglades
Caloosahatchee River Citizens
Association / Riverwatch
Center for Biological Diversity
Clean Water Action
Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Defenders of Wildlife
"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society
Earthjustice
Environment Florida
Everglades Coordinating Council
Everglades Foundation
Everglades Law Center
Florida Conservation Alliance
Florida Defenders of the Environment
Florida Keys Environmental Fund
Florida Native Plant Society
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida Wildlife Federation
Friends of the Arthur R. Marshall
Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of the Everglades
Hendry Glades Audubon Society
Institute for Regional Conservation
Izaak Walton League Florida Division
Izaak Walton League Florida Keys Chapter
Izaak Walton League Mangrove Chapter
Izaak Walton League of America
Last Stand
League of Women Voters of Florida
Loxahatchee River Coalition
Martin County Conservation Alliance
Miami Waterkeeper
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Ocean Research & Conservation Association
Reef Relief
Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation
Save It Now, Glades!
Sierra Club
Sierra Club Broward Group
Sierra Club Calusa Group
Sierra Club Central Florida Group
Sierra Club Florida Chapter
Sierra Club Loxahatchee Group
Sierra Club Miami Group
Snook and Gamefish Foundation
South Florida Audubon Society
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Tropical Audubon Society
The Urban Environment League of
Greater Miami

June 19, 2015

Congressman Curbelo
1429 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Patrick Murphy
211 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Foreign Spill Protection Act

Dear Congressman Curbelo and Congressman Murphy:

On behalf of the 57 member organizations of the Everglades Coalition, we write to support H.R. 1684, the Foreign Spill Protection Act. As organizations dedicated to protection and restoration of America's Everglades, we recognize the importance of this legislation for ensuring that a foreign party responsible for an oil spill that reaches U.S. waters is held accountable for its clean up.

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill demonstrated the impact of a spill on wildlife, natural resources, and Florida's tourism-based economy. Five years later, the consequences of the Deepwater Horizon spill are still not fully understood. With many foreign nations in close proximity to South Florida, the Everglades is at risk of suffering devastating impacts from a spill that originates in one of these nations. For example, Mexico, Cuba, and the Bahamas are either currently drilling or looking at exploratory drilling just beyond U.S. waters.

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 controls how a party responsible for an oil spill in U.S. waters must pay to clean up the spill. However, the law did not fully take into account financial responsibility for an oil spill that occurs off the coast of a foreign nation and reaches U.S. waters and coasts.

America's Everglades supports nearly 70 threatened and endangered species and provides the water supply for nearly 8 million Floridians. If oil was to reach the River of Grass, there could be serious impacts to the Greater Everglades Ecosystem that are in direct contrast to the goals of Everglades restoration. The goals of restoring and protecting estuarine, beach and near-shore habitat are especially threatened.

If a spill occurs and oil was to reach the shores of South Florida, it could cause great harm to four national parks units - Everglades, Biscayne, and Dry Tortugas National Parks and Big Cypress National Preserve. National parks should be able to recover the costs of cleanup and restoration whenever damage is done by a private party or government. These parks attract 2.5 million visitors, generate 2,619 jobs, and contribute over \$275 million to the economy in Florida annually.

Committed to full protection and restoration of America's Everglades

In addition, the Everglades supports industries like ecotourism, commercial, recreational and charter boat fishing. A healthy environment also increases real estate values. An oil spill that impacts the Everglades could result in significant economic losses for these industries.

The Foreign Spill Protection Act ensures that any party responsible for an oil spill that causes harm to the Everglades, Florida's coastal habitat or National Parks should also be held responsible for the full clean-up and all associated costs, regardless of origin. We thank you for introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Cara Capp

Cara Capp
National Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Totoiu', with a stylized, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

Jason Totoiu
State Co-Chair