



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

March 30, 2018

Dear Senator Nelson:

As Congress begins the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations process, Charlotte 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. Charlotte County was pleased with the robust funding levels provided by Congress for these programs in the FY 2018 omnibus, and we encourage you to continue to invest in these programs that are essential to our shared constituents. Of particular concern to Charlotte County are the Administration's proposals to:

- Eliminate the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which would prevent the County from addressing essential community development needs and serving the less fortunate in our community. We request that funding for the program remain at the FY 2018 level of \$3.3 billion.
- Eliminate the NOAA Sea Grant program. This would negatively impact the condition of our coastline, the health of the marine ecosystem, and impact the services provided by the Sea Grant program run through the Charlotte County Natural Resource Division. We support keeping funding level with FY 2018, at \$65 million.
- Eliminate the Community Services Block Grants (CSBG), which would impact the County's ability to work with members of the community that are highly motivated to reduce their dependence on public benefits. The County supports keeping funding at least level to the FY 2018 amount of \$742 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 the County's Manasota Key project and as 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.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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- 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.
- Eliminate the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which is essential in Charlotte County for some of our seniors and most impoverished families. The elimination of this program would create a gap in ensuring access to proper cooling for our residents during the excessive heat in the summer months. We support keeping funding level with FY 2018 at \$3.6 billion.
- Eliminate the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), detrimentally impacting the County's ability to connect citizens with affordable, accessible housing. We urge you to keep funding level with the FY 2018 number of \$1.36 billion.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kenneth W. Doherty".

Kenneth W. Doherty, Chairman
Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners

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