



January 11, 2016

The Honorable Rick Scott  
Governor  
State of Florida  
The Capitol, Plaza Level 5  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

The Honorable Steve Crisafulli  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
State of Florida  
420 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

The Honorable Andy Gardiner  
President of the Senate  
State of Florida  
409 The Capitol  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Dear Governor Scott, Speaker Crisafulli, and President Gardiner:

On behalf of the business leaders of the Florida Council of 100, thank you for leading the charge for the development of world-class water policy for our state. Cultivation and protection of this most valuable resource is, and will continue to be, key to the success of a rapidly growing Florida.

That said and despite the criticality of water to Florida's economy and quality of life, no one more than the Council of 100 appreciates the difficulty of balancing the principal issues and bringing together disparate groups who, while meaning well, may have different ways of getting to the end goal of a Florida with sufficient high-quality water. You are all to be commended for your ability to build consensus in the area of water resource management and develop legislation that will vastly improve water policy in the state.

As you know, the Florida Council of 100 is no stranger to the give and take of water reform. Nearly 15 years ago, the Council of 100 established a Water Management Task Force to address Florida's water management from a statewide perspective. Its mission was to recommend statewide water management policies that foster sustainable and



environmentally sound water supplies and resources and which are economically feasible to meet current and future Florida needs.

While it is heartening to see the Legislature address many of the same topics the Council of 100 tackled back in 2003 (e.g., data-driven policy making, public-public and public-private partnership, avoiding the adverse effects of water supply competition), there is one area in which we would hope state policy makers would continue to focus on in future years: water conservation.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has estimated that Floridians will need an additional 1.4 billion gallons per day of freshwater by 2035. FDEP further projects that water conservation will need to account for at least a third of that amount – no small feat.

In pursuit of this goal, state leaders should be applauded for already declaring conservation to be a state objective, in the state interest, and an “important means of achieving the economical and efficient utilization of water necessary, in part, to constitute a reasonable-beneficial use.” Moreover, current legislation furthers this perspective by, among other items, requiring the establishment of certain conservation goals (e.g., for the Central Florida Water Initiative Area), incentivizing conservation relating to consumptive use permitting, prioritizing agricultural public-private partnerships that maximize conservation, mandating the promotion of expanded cost-share criteria for additional conservation practices, and laying the groundwork for the conduct of innovative conservation pilot projects.

These are important steps, but, given the potential gravity of future scenarios, the Council of 100 respectfully requests the following:

- State leadership should provide, or facilitate the allocation of, significant funding to the conservation pilot projects proposed under current legislation, as well as other programs or projects that promote conservation in a cost-effective manner.
- As described by FDEP, the state should further consider water conservation to be a “source’ that is both inexpensive and plentiful” and incent it as such. Though not considered a “classic” water supply element, water conservation stretches existing supplies, thus preventing the need for new water sources and facilities. It also protects the environment, puts less pressure on sewage treatment facilities, and uses less energy for water pumping and heating.

In short, the mission of the Council of 100 is to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of all Floridians, and the robustness our state’s water policy, programs, and infrastructure will go a long way in determining the long-term effectiveness of such a



mission in our fast-growing state. Thus, please do not hesitate to contact the Council if we can be of assistance in addressing these vital issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rhea F. Law".

Rhea F. Law  
Chair

cc:     The Honorable Richard Corcoran  
          The Honorable Joe Negron  
          The Honorable Matt Caldwell  
          The Honorable Charlie Dean  
          The Honorable Ben Albritton  
          The Honorable Alan Hays  
          The Honorable Tom Lee  
          The Honorable Adam Putnam