



DANIELLA LEVINE CAVA
MAYOR
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

April 13, 2022

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
1114 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lois Frankel
2305 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Wasserman Schultz and Frankel,

On behalf of Miami-Dade County, I write to support a Community Project Funding request to fund the initial federal share of the Central & South Florida (C&SF) Comprehensive Review Study. This Study is critical to improve the resilience of South Florida and assess the full extent of Florida's aging flood control system given the pressures of sea level rise, higher water table conditions, and rainfall intensification. Furthermore, the proposed Study is the highest ranked new study recommendation to come from the South Atlantic Coastal Study (SACS).

As you know, the FY 2022 Omnibus Appropriations bill provided \$500,000 in federal funding for the C&SF Section 216 Study, to be initiated in partnership between the USACE and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the non-federal sponsor. An additional \$475,000 is proposed for the study in the FY 2023 Administration budget. In addition, the Florida State Legislature has taken action to advance this effort. In the 2022 legislative session, HB 513 directs the SFWMD to prepare and submit a consolidated annual report regarding the state of the Section 216 C&SF Study. The Florida State Legislature also approved a \$2 million appropriation for the SFWMD to initiate this study while partners continue to gain the necessary federal appropriations. Both are pending the governor's approval.

While critically important, the scope of the Section 216 Study is narrow and only intended to investigate coastal salinity structures for flood resilience. Unfortunately, given its more limited authorization, the Section 216 Study will not consider flood resilience needs throughout the entire system and further inland. Instead, a separate, more comprehensive study of the C&SF flood control system is required. Thankfully, Section 309(l) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1992, Public Law 102-580 provides authorization to conduct the C&SF Comprehensive Review Study. While the federal authorization is provided, the funding for this broader study is not.

Hence, a dual path approach is needed, with implementation of Section 216 and Section 309 Studies in parallel. The Section 216 study will fast-track analysis and improvements addressing the salinity control structures/flood gates while the Section 309 Study provides concurrent analysis of more comprehensive system improvements such as canal cross section, conveyance, and secondary structures to augment these initial resilience investments.

The C&SF Flood Control Project was authorized in 1948 – more than 70 years ago – and has served as an invaluable contributor to the economic success of South Florida, including Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties. However, it was designed to deliver flood protection for 2 million residents, not the 11 million it currently serves, nor the estimated 15 million people who are expected to live in the region in 30 years. Today, the C&SF System is under substantial stress due to changes in the physical environment, especially increased rainfall intensity and rising sea levels. Stormwater severely strains the system and sea level rise significantly threatens project operations.

Without a fully functioning flood control system, South Florida's citizens, economy, and broader environment will be at risk. It is essential that the C&SF Comprehensive Review Study be initiated to evaluate these external changes to the landscape and propose solutions to address the challenges. Thank you for your consideration of this critical funding request.

We appreciate all you do for us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniella Levine Cava". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.