



FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE

January 22, 2018

Mr. Daniel O'Keefe, Governing Board Chairman
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

Re: District progress toward implementation of SB10, EAA southern storage

Dear Chairman O'Keefe:

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation has been following and participating in the District's work to meet the intent of SB10, EAA southern storage. Our policy supports the Everglades Restoration Programs throughout the Lake Okeechobee Region as long as it's based on sound science and engineering. Under the leadership of Ernie Marks, District staff has maintained these principles in coming up with the best possible alternatives necessary to meet the requirements of SB10 as well as achieving the Central Everglades Restoration Project goal of increasing flows to the Everglades.

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation fully supports the efforts and direction of the District to date in meeting the legislative mandate of SB10 and staying the course with the project timelines. However, we are concerned with recent rhetoric from various environmental organizations that are questioning the District's science and lobbying for more land.

We support the continuation of agricultural production in south Florida and the partnership agriculture has forged with the State of Florida and the Federal Government throughout the Everglades Restoration process. With that said, we are confident the current alternatives will be adequate to meet the intent of SB 10 without the need to purchase additional productive agricultural land in the EAA.

Thank you and the District staff for your commitment to sound science while keeping this project on a fast track to completion. As always, we look forward in continuing to work with the District Board and staff on Everglades Restoration throughout south Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary Ritter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Ritter".

Gary Ritter
Assistant Director of Government & Community Affairs
Florida Farm Bureau Federation