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## Give Glades representation

Palm Beach Post Editorial

Thursday, December 18, 2008

When the board of the South Florida Water Management District made a decision that could decimate the Glades, no board member from the Glades could speak up for the Glades.

By law, the nine board members must represent all parts of the 16-county district. One seat traditionally represents the farming areas south and west of Lake Okeechobee.

Former Gov. Jeb Bush filled that seat with Malcolm "Bubba" Wade, a vice president of Clewiston-based U.S. Sugar. Mr. Wade resigned in late June after public disclosure of the state's proposed deal first to buy U.S. Sugar, then to purchase just the company's land for \$1.34 billion.

U.S. Sugar deal



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That seat still was vacant Tuesday, almost six months later, when the board voted 4-3 to approve the sale. Perhaps Gov. Crist, who badly wanted the deal to pass, didn't fill the seat because he believed that the person would oppose the sale on the grounds that it would harm the area's economy. Perhaps he was distracted by his campaign to become John McCain's running mate. Perhaps it was both. Either way, it was wrong.

Because the closing isn't until September, the board still could face key votes on the sale. In fact, the deal still could fall through. Gov. Crist should fill the seat soon - with someone who will show more concern for the Glades than the governor has.

**See map:**

[Obstacles clouding proposal](#)



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