

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife, Florida Bay Forever, Climate Reality Project Boca Raton Chapter, Ding Darling Wildlife Society, Friends of the Everglades, Florida Division of the Izaak Walton League of America, Florida Oceanographic Society, Hendry-Glades Audubon Society, Izaak Walton League of America Cypress Chapter, League of Women Voters of Florida, Moms Clean Air Force, Natural Resources Defense Council, Peace River Audubon, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, ReThink Energy Florida, Sierra Club, Tropical Audubon, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

September 20, 2021

Dear Honorable Members of the Florida Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to urge you to swiftly enact a Clean Electricity Performance Program (CEPP), that would incentivize utilities to ramp up the percentage of U.S. electricity coming from zero-carbon sources to 80% by 2030. This critical budget investment program will put us on a path to 100% clean electricity by 2035 and serve as the cornerstone for a broader equitable clean energy transformation that will clean our air and water, protect public health, bolster energy independence, and protect our investment in restoring America's Everglades.

Climate change represents an existential threat to Florida's environment, economy, and way of life. As the planet warms, Florida is ground zero for impacts such as sea-level rise, extreme heat, and stronger storms. Sea-level rise threatens Florida's Everglades and the \$3.4 billion investment in its congressional authorized restoration efforts to improve water quality and quantity and to protect South Florida's water supply for future generations. Red tide and blue-green algae events are being increasingly exacerbated by a warming planet causing massive fish kills and dangerous health risks for Floridians, while the intensifying heat hits our most vulnerable residents the hardest. We must address the problem at its source.

Scientists from around the world have recently issued the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report on climate change - which is the strongest warning ever on the need for urgent action. The report unequivocally confirms that the climate change impacts are intensifying, human activity is driving them, extreme weather is directly linked to a warming planet, and that we must significantly cut carbon pollution in the next decade to avert the worst impacts of a changing climate.

The electricity sector is one of the largest contributors to carbon pollution driving climate change - and a huge consumer of water. Fortunately, the cost of clean renewable energy and battery storage has plummeted in recent years, making solar and wind energy among the lowest-cost options for new power generation facilities, not to mention the vast potential for using energy smarter through energy efficiency investments. Clean energy is a proven means to create jobs, reduce pollution, and protect our investment in America's Everglades.

While renewable energy development is ramping up significantly, utilities should be increasing their investment in renewables because it is the lowest cost to consumers and necessary to meet the climate challenge. Presently, approximately 21% of US electricity generation is from renewable resources. Therefore, passing legislation that accelerates the transition to 100% clean electricity in 2035 is critical in timely moving us away from fossil fuels. Such an investment promises to create hundreds of thousands of good jobs, spur economic growth, reduce carbon pollution, and has the potential to reduce utility bills for customers in Florida and across the country.

Climate change impacts stand to undermine the significant strides that have been made to restore America's Everglades and realize the benefits of its restoration. The Biden Administration has committed \$350 million for Everglades restoration in FY2022 and urgent action is needed to protect that investment from the devastating consequences of the climate crisis.

Therefore we support a Clean Electricity Performance Program, that makes historic investments in clean electricity coming from zero-carbon resources by 2030 and ensures an equitable transition to a clean and water-smart energy future. While the most recent IPCC report makes clear that time is not on our side, we have clean electricity technologies today to tackle the climate crisis. We urge you to lead and to move swiftly to enact a Clean Electricity Payment Program. The future of our Everglades, our drinking water, our economy, and way of life depend on it.

Sincerely,

Friends of the Everglades

Eve Samples, *Executive Director*

League of Women Voters of Florida

Cecile Scoon, *President*

Sierra Club

Rhonda Roff, *Calusa Group Energy Chair*

Florida Bay Forever

Emma Haydocy, *Executive Director*

Peace River Audubon

Brenda Curtis, *Co-President*

Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife

Michele H. Mold, *Secretary*

Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation

James Evans, *Dir. of Environmental Policy*

Florida Oceanographic Society

Mark Perry, *Executive Director*

Izaak Walton League of America Cypress Chapter

Pete Quasius, *President*

Hendry-Glades Audubon Society

Steve Buczynski, *President*

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