



December 17, 2018

U.S. Representative Brian Mast
2182 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Mast,

The ecology and wildlife of the Florida coast have become defining features of our community, particularly here in Fort Pierce. As a member of the Fort Pierce community, I know how hard we all have worked to protect our coastline and the life that it supports. You and your staff have been instrumental in promoting responsible environmental policies both in Washington and back here in Florida that protect our waterways from invasive and harmful algal blooms.

I want to thank you for your work so far on this critical issue and urge your support of similar conservation programs that extend far beyond Florida's coastlines, specifically, international conservation programs supported by the U.S. government.

More than ever, local environmental factors are affected by events taking place around the world. Improperly managed natural resources and decaying forests, wetlands, rivers, and lakes around the world all contribute to the worsening natural disasters that have hugely impacted the people of Florida for decades. In 2004, hurricanes Frances and Jeanne caused widespread devastation right here in Fort Pierce. Through support from your office and local elected officials, we have been responsive to these disasters through rebuilding efforts and preventative infrastructure. FEMA and local volunteers were critical to this response, however, many parts of the world do not enjoy such effective government and community oversight of their natural resources.

Yet, we have to recognize that our global environment is connected. The health of ecosystems and landscapes across the world indirectly affect the health of Florida's coastline. Thankfully, similar preventative efforts have proven effective at preparing international communities for disaster—these efforts both conserve their surrounding ecosystems and limit the death toll of major disasters.

Your continued commitment to protecting Florida's environment and the lives and businesses that depend on its health have been much appreciated by your constituents. Support for international conservation funding by the U.S. should be considered an extension of these efforts.

Sincerely,

Linda Hudson
Mayor

cc: Nicholas Mimms, City Manager
Linda Cox, City Clerk