

By Senator Dean

3-00786-12

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Senate Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States, urging Congress to direct the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reconsider the proposed rule to designate Kings Bay as a manatee refuge and in lieu of the rule partner with the state and local governments in seeking joint long-term solutions to manatee protection.

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service established the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge in 1983 to provide protection and sanctuary for the endangered West Indian manatee within portions of Kings Bay in Crystal River, and

WHEREAS, the rules currently in effect within the refuge have resulted in a significant increase in manatee population as evidenced by monitoring, sound science, and local data, and

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed a rule to designate all of Kings Bay as a manatee refuge, and

WHEREAS, adoption of the proposed rule will have a significant adverse impact on the tourism industry, which is a critical part of the Crystal River economy, at a time when its local economy is already seriously weakened by challenges within the national economy, and

WHEREAS, adoption of the proposed rule will also have a significant adverse impact on the riparian rights of property owners adjacent to Kings Bay and the connecting waterways, and

WHEREAS, prohibiting the use of any portion of Kings Bay

3-00786-12

20121614

30 for recreational boating activities, such as swimming, kayaking,
31 and water skiing, will force such activities into the channel of
32 Crystal River, subjecting participants to significant risks
33 associated with sharing the channel with commercial fishing
34 boats and other large watercraft, and

35 WHEREAS, there are viable alternatives to the proposed
36 rule, such as increased enforcement of the rules currently in
37 effect, which would accomplish the desired outcome of a reduced
38 incidence rate of manatee injury or death without unduly
39 restricting public use of Kings Bay, a water body that has
40 historically served as the heart of the Crystal River community,
41 and

42 WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Crystal River and
43 the Board of County Commissioners of Citrus County passed
44 unanimous resolutions requesting that the United States Fish and
45 Wildlife Service reconsider the proposed rule, and

46 WHEREAS, adoption of the proposed rule without a proper
47 review of the impact on the City of Crystal River and the
48 surrounding communities would be arbitrary and capricious, NOW,
49 THEREFORE,

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51 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

52
53 That the Congress of the Unites States is urged to direct
54 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reconsider the
55 proposed rule to designate Kings Bay as a manatee refuge and in
56 lieu of the rule partner with the state and local governments in
57 seeking joint long-term solutions to manatee protection.

58 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be

3-00786-12

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59 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
60 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
61 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
62 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.