

HM 611

2012

## 1 House Memorial

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

9  
10 WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
11 established the Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge in 1983  
12 to provide protection and sanctuary for the endangered West  
13 Indian manatee within portions of Kings Bay in Crystal River,  
14 and

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

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

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

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

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29 WHEREAS, prohibiting the use of any portion of Kings Bay  
 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,

50  
 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

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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  
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.