

Joe Negrón's Everglades Bill Questioned By Conservatives

Joe Negrón: The James Madison Institute released a report to explain the dire consequences that would befall Florida if SB10 is passed.

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, March 2, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Cleaning up the Everglades is a complicated quest. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the best environmental scientists in the state of Florida have debated for decades about the best use of money and available resources to clean up the waterways and restore the natural flow of water through the Everglades, as best as possible considering highway 75 and the Tamiami Trail now run through it.

The state of Florida and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers have studied the Florida waterway issue from every conceivable angle and in 2000 they jointly came together to come up with the \$10 billion dollar, 30 year, Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). CERP (<https://www.evergladesrestoration.gov>) was authorized by Congress as a plan to "restore, preserve, and protect the south Florida ecosystem while providing for other water-related needs of the region, including water supply and flood protection." It is the largest environmental restoration project ever undertaken in the United States, with an increased budget that now stands at over \$16 billion.

In defiance of the wishes and recommendations of the scientists from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District, Incoming senate president [Joe Negrón](#) is sponsoring a bill in this years Florida legislative session to spend at least \$2.5 billion of Florida state tax revenues on his pet project to acquire 60,000 acres of farmland in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) to build a massive water retention reservoir under Lake Okeechobee to hold, clean and divert water away from the eastward and westward waterways. Many scientists are saying his proposal (Senate Bill 10) will hinder the ongoing environmental projects around the state and create wasteful projects in areas where they are not needed. The CERP project is already building water retention reservoirs - north of Lake Okeechobee, where it has been determined that Lake O water pollution is originating from. To build another reservoir south of the lake would be a billion dollar boondoggle.



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In the past week, The James Madison Institute released a report to explain the dire consequences that would befall Florida residents, and the ecosystem, if incoming senate president Joe Negrón is

successful in passing SB10 (<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2017/0010/BillText/Filed/PDF>).

The James Madison Institute was founded in 1987 and is one of the nation's oldest and largest 501(c)3 nonprofit, nonpartisan research and educational organizations. The Institute's policy recommendations "are rooted in the principles found in the U.S. Constitution and such timeless ideals as limited government, economic freedom, federalism and individual liberty coupled with individual responsibility." Their research report on Senate Bill 10 entitled "Sticker Shock" uncovered the inflated costs and fake science behind the proposal.

In "Sticker Shock: Examining the Economic Impacts of Land Acquisition in the EAA, James Madison Institute president J. Robert McClure warned of extreme economic aftershock in Palm Beach and Hendry counties once 60,000 acres of productive farmland is removed from the areas tax rolls, and he detailed the residual loss of jobs and income that will follow. McClure stated, "This study looks beyond the 2.4 billion taxpayer dollars that would be spent and examines the additional cost to Florida families in terms of lost jobs, lower household income and an eroded business climate,"

Tea Party and conservatives have also been critical of Joe Negron's bill that increases spending and doesn't take care of the environmental issues. Emails to Florida Tea Party members called this SB10 "A two billion dollar 'Government Gone Wild' spending spree based on fake science that kills jobs and doesn't help the water problem."

J. Antonio Villamil, founder and senior fellow at The James Madison Institute says the overall negative economic impact of Senate Bill 10 on Florida -- not counting the cost of purchasing the land and constructing the reservoir, will cost Floridians \$695 million - per year. This means a reduction of \$166 million in annual household income, a loss of \$282 million in gross domestic product and an estimated loss of 4,148 jobs from Belle Glade, South Bay, Clewiston, Hendry and Palm Beach counties.

Villamil explained, "All of these towns will experience significant loss of employment opportunities and shuttered businesses within and around the proposed purchase. Further, our research found that the proposed land to be flooded produces a variety of agricultural-related products, with suppliers to these businesses extending well beyond the local area and towns. Thus, the negative impacts will be felt statewide, in addition to the local areas and towns."

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