

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 20, 2017

The Honorable Scott Pruitt
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Pruitt:

We greatly appreciate your agency's initial efforts to assist the state of Florida in monitoring the status of drinking water and wastewater systems impacted by Hurricane Irma. Unfortunately, multiple reports suggest wastewater systems across the state have been severely overwhelmed by a combination of high rainfall totals, storm surge, localized flooding, and power outages.

In the most extreme and concerning case, several individuals in contact with flood waters in Everglades City have required emergency medical attention to treat life-threatening infections. Sadly, one of these individuals was not able to be saved, and another had his leg amputated. Concerns are mounting in Everglades City and other similarly impacted communities that additional loss of life may occur without more assistance.

We urge you to continue to work with state and municipal governments and local utilities to expedite the provision of any Federal Operations Support, Technical Assistance, and Direct Federal Assistance needed to reduce sewage and untreated wastewater exposure risks to Florida residents who are desperately trying to piece their lives back together. To the extent possible, we also ask that you strongly consider targeting EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund assistance for the purpose of enhancing the capacity and resilience of drinking water, stormwater, and wastewater systems to weather future disasters.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator