

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2006

The Honorable E. Clay Shaw, Jr.
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Clay:

Since you serve as Chairman of the Florida Congressional Delegation, we are writing to express our concern about numerous reports indicating that some Members of the Florida Delegation are working on a compromise related to offshore oil and natural gas drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Most recently, an article in *E&E Daily* (6/8/2006) stated that "Representative Adam Putnam, chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee, said he is 'hopeful' there will be a compromise on outer continental shelf drilling language." Likewise, an article in the *Bradenton Herald* (5/30/2006) suggested that "some lawmakers have started to meet with House Resources Committee chairman Representative Richard Pombo."

Offshore drilling is an issue that affects all Floridians, regardless of their political party affiliation. Negotiating a deal on offshore drilling behind closed doors compromises Florida's shores and the people we represent, particularly those whose livelihood depends on Florida's pristine beaches. As Florida's representatives in Congress, we owe it to our constituents to debate the future of oil and gas drilling off of our coasts in the sunshine.

For the past two decades, this delegation has set its political differences aside in an effort to protect Florida. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush issued a presidential moratorium protecting Florida's waters from drilling. In 1998, President Clinton extended the moratorium until 2012. During that time, a united Florida delegation has fought off numerous attempts to overturn the moratoria, an important fact that Representative Mario Diaz-Balart recently noted in an interview with the *Naples News*. According to the article published on June 4, 2006, Representative Diaz-Balart said that "the large and united Florida delegation in Congress has been able to renew an annual moratorium on oil drilling off the Gulf Coast for a number of years."

Today, a divided delegation could leave Florida with irreversible environmental and economic damage. If we are to continue to protect Florida from the dangers of offshore oil and gas drilling, we must work together and remain united. It is our hope that all 27 Members of the Florida Delegation will be able to participate in these negotiations, which will impact Floridians for generations to come.

The Honorable E. Clay Shaw, Jr.

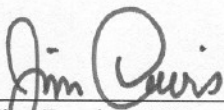
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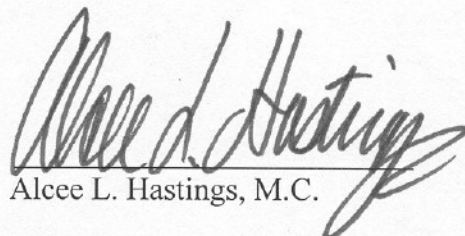
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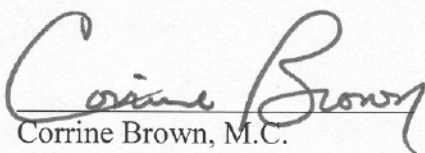
We hope that you, as Chairman of the Florida Congressional Delegation, will schedule a meeting to allow all our Members to discuss this very important topic.

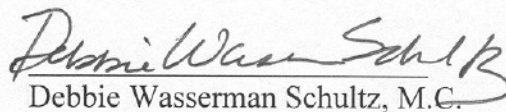
Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working with you and all the Members of the Florida Delegation on this very important issue.

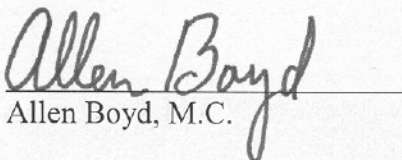
Sincerely,


Jim Davis, M.C.


Alcee L. Hastings, M.C.


Corrine Brown, M.C.


Debbie Wasserman Schultz, M.C.


Allen Boyd, M.C.


Robert Wexler, M.C.


Kendrick B. Meek, M.C.

Cc: Governor Jeb Bush
Senator Bill Nelson
Senator Mel Martinez
Representative Michael Bilirakis
Representative Ginny Brown-Waite
Representative Ander Crenshaw
Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Representative Mario Diaz-Balart
Representative Tom Feeney
Representative Mark Foley
Representative Katherine Harris
Representative Ric Keller
Representative Connie Mack
Representative John Mica
Representative Jeff Miller

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Representative Adam Putnam

Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Representative Cliff Stearns

Representative David Weldon

Representative C.W. "Bill" Young