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ICYMI: "Bolstering Water Quality In Florida Through Honest And Open Collaboration"

WASHINGTON – Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL) published the following op-ed entitled, "[Bolstering Water Quality In Florida Through Honest And Open Collaboration](#)" in the Floridian Press. The op-ed previews today's first-annual Donalds-Florida Water Quality Summit in Fort Myers and details the importance of bringing together local, state, and federal government officials with subject-matter experts and stakeholders to debate and develop real solutions regarding water quality.

Read the full op-ed [here](#) or below:

Bolstering Water Quality In Florida Through Honest And Open Collaboration

Representative Byron Donalds (R-FL)
The Floridian Press – August, 26, 2024

As an elected Member of Congress who represents Florida's 19th Congressional District, I've always been a staunch advocate for maximizing the quality of water in Southwest Florida and the Sunshine State.

Truth be known, public policy considerations surrounding water quality can be a convoluted and difficult topic to discuss—especially with the wide range of pertinent industries and entities that have an interest in Florida's water.

While I often hear different perspectives about water quality in the State of Florida, it's rare that individuals from different industries have the opportunity to speak honestly with one another about Florida's water. From my perspective, this is unfortunate because there are a lot of common interests between different industries that can be leveraged to improve water quality in the Sunshine State moving forward.

Hence, on behalf of my constituents in Southwest Florida, I decided to host the first-annual Florida Water Quality Summit. This historic event will bring together experts and stakeholders from a handful of different industries, including water and environment, recreation, boating, conservation, fishing, agriculture, development, tourism, all levels of government, etc.

Moreover, the Summit will be an opportunity for a wide array of stakeholders to hear cross-industry perspectives about Florida's water and will allow individuals to engage in a bipartisan fashion to hear different perspectives and generate ideas relating to improving the quality of Florida's water. Also worth mentioning is the fact that the FL Water Quality Summit will be off-the-record and closed to the press.

The nature of this relaxed setting will assist with fostering an atmosphere for honest, open, and needed discussions without the crippling worry of misspeaking or being taken out of context, thereby preserving the integrity of the conversation.

My sincere hope and intent in hosting the FL Water Quality Summit is that, through joint effort, meaningful action, and open discussion, we can collectively protect Florida's unique ecosystems, maximize water quality, and ensure economic success in the Sunshine State for many years to come.

Specifically at the Summit, pertinent stakeholders will discuss (1) the importance of clean water and Everglades restoration; (2) the economic impact of water quality; (3) how 404 permits impact Everglades restoration efforts and water quality; (4) bipartisan all-of-government efforts to maximize Florida's water quality; (5) innovative solutions to combat water quality challenges; and (6) honest cross-industry ways to improve water quality in Florida moving forward.

In my view, the Summit will provide a unique opportunity for individuals to express their honest beliefs and engage in a passionate discussion about water quality in the Sunshine State. In addition to hosting the FL Water Quality Summit, I've introduced several important water-related legislative initiatives in the 118th Congress to date.

For example, I've introduced the Water Quality & Environmental Innovation Act, the Combat Harmful Algal Blooms Act, the Harmful Algal Blooms Essential Forecasting Act, the Convert HABs to Fuel Act, and the FISHES Act.

If enacted into law, these meaningful initiatives would provide great benefit to Southwest Florida, the State of Florida, and the United States as a whole.

Moving forward, I will continue to lead initiatives that improve the quality of water in the Sunshine State and I will continue to foster cross-industry discussion about potential ways to improve water quality for future generations of Floridians.

Through honest and open collaboration, we as Floridians—regardless of industry—can collectively make a difference & bolster Florida's water quality.

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