



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES COMMISSIONER ADAM H. PUTNAM

October 15, 2014

Ms. Cynthia Kelly, Director
Office of Policy and Budget
Executive Office of the Governor
The Capitol, Room 1702
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Enclosed is the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for FY 2015-16 through FY 2019-20, which will be posted to the Florida Fiscal Portal, following the instructions dated July 2014. The information provided electronically is a true and accurate presentation of our proposed Fixed Capital Outlay Legislative Budget Request of \$59,418,405 for the 2015-16 fiscal year.

This proposal reflects the department's commitment to foster continued growth and ensure the long-term sustainability of Florida's \$108 billion agriculture industry, as well as serve as a good steward of the state's natural resources, help ensure the safety and wholesomeness of food and protect consumers from fraud and deceptive business practices.

Improving the health of Florida's water bodies and growing the supply of our water resources is one of my top priorities as Commissioner of Agriculture. From Apalachicola to the Everglades, every region in this state faces water-related challenges. But each region is unique, and we cannot address each challenge with the same approach. Florida's water policy must be flexible, comprehensive and long-term.

To support this priority, my fixed capital outlay request includes \$15 million for restoration projects around Lake Okeechobee, including water retention and nutrient reduction efforts surrounding Lake Okeechobee, St. Lucie River and Caloosahatchee River watersheds. This capital request is in addition to a number of operating requests included in my budget proposal to address issues associated with the Springs Initiative, the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program Area, agricultural water supply planning, and partnership agreements with water management districts and soil and water conservation districts.

Maintaining Florida's natural landscape is another critically important issue within the state, and Florida's agricultural producers play an important role in protecting this landscape. The Rural and Family Lands Protection Program provides funding to invest in conservation easements that will protect Florida's landscape, wildlife habitat and other natural resources, while maintaining private ownership and supporting the local economy. My fixed capital outlay proposal includes \$25 million to support the Rural

Ms. Cynthia Kelly

October 15, 2014

Page Two

and Family Lands Protection Program and continue investing in conservation easements located in environmentally critical regions of the state.

Additionally, protection of the agriculture industry, as well as the citizens of this state, remains one of my top priorities. The department's fixed capital outlay proposal includes \$2 million for the renovation of the Bronson Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and \$3.7 million for the construction of a new petroleum laboratory and multi-purpose space. These lab facilities are critical in the protection of the public and the agricultural industry from potentially harmful animal diseases and adulterated petroleum products.

Finally, my fixed capital outlay proposal also includes a number of maintenance and repair and code correction projects totaling approximately \$7.8 million across the department's various divisions and offices. Projects include roof and HVAC replacements, as well as road and bridge repairs and maintenance and small construction at our state forests and state farmer's markets. These projects are important to ensure the safety of the department's employees, as well as the citizens that access these facilities and state forests on a daily basis.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues and if you have any questions feel free to call me or my staff at (850) 410-2280.

Sincerely,



Adam H. Putnam
Commissioner of Agriculture

Enclosure