Dear Representative Murphy:

My name is (your name) and I am a member of (your organization). I live and work in (your area). I am writing to express my grave concerns about the polluted discharges from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie Estuary and Indian River Lagoon, two of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the United States.

With the onset of another deadly outbreak of blue-green algae looming, the continuing failure of current water management practices represents a major crisis. You must step forward.

The excessive and tainted fresh water released into to the estuary kills important filter-feeders, wipes out crucially needed seagrasses and disrupts hundreds of other forms of estuarine life. The river cries for your courageous action rather than generalities and platitudes.

These waterways are the engines that drive our economy and provide countless other value to our lives. A new report estimates their economic worth to be in excess of 4 billion dollars.   I am deeply troubled that the unnatural discharges from inland releases will heighten what has been a long-running disaster. I strongly object to the ongoing manipulation of water which is done in order to maintain the over-drainage of the Everglades Agricultural Area. The days of pandering to these politically powerful special interests must come to an end.

I fully support acquiring the land needed for a flowway south from Lake Okeechobee; the only real fix possible. This initiative must be a top priority. Also, I strongly oppose the policy of back pumping polluted water from farmlands into Lake Okeechobee. I support and insist that the South Florida Water Management District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and all other parties involved move ahead with prompt steps to bring back a River of Grass flowing south from the lake.

In addition, I demand that all parties do everything possible to end the federal government’s wasteful and destructive sugar support program which not only serves to perpetuate the

over-drainage of our wetlands but costs consumers billions of dollars in added prices at the market.

Your leadership and actions on these critical issues will influence how I vote and whom I support. I would appreciate hearing from you regarding these specific points.

Sincerely,