BRIAN J. MAST
18TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0918

January 9, 2020

Colonel Andrew Kelly
Jacksonville District Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
701 San Marco Boulevard
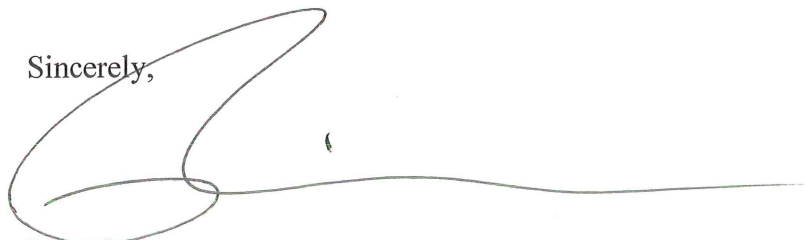Jacksonville, FL 32207

Dear Colonel Kelly:

It has come to my attention that there is a grave conflict of interest on the Project Delivery Team (PDT) for the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM). I am writing to request that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers immediately remove Mr. Tom MacVicar and Mr. Bill Baker as members of the Project Delivery Team.

As you may be aware, on August 16, 2019, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, under the direction of Commissioner Nikki Fried, designated Mr. MacVicar and Mr. Baker as participants on the PDT, which is restricted to representatives of government agencies. As you are further aware, members of the public are not allowed to be on the PDT and participation from the public is limited to designated public comment periods during the meetings.

Mr. MacVicar and Mr. Baker are registered lobbyists for the Florida Sugar Cane League, among other organizations. The Florida Sugar Cane League "represents," and is funded in large part by, the U.S. Sugar Corporation, which has sued the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over its operations of Lake Okeechobee. Through this lawsuit, U.S. Sugar—in their own words—sought to "rein in the Army Corps' rogue operations."

In short, this is a brazen attempt by U.S. Sugar and Commissioner Nikki Fried to skew the results of LOSOM, giving this industry special access and influence that countless citizens of Florida who are deeply concerned about the public health impacts of Lake Okeechobee's operations do not have. I, therefore, request your immediate action to remove Mr. MacVicar and Mr. Baker from the Project Delivery Team.

Sincerely,

Brian Mast
Member of Congress