



CHARLOTTE COUNTY
FLORIDA



September 9th, 2021

State Representative Michael Grant
Chair, Charlotte County Legislative Delegation
4355 Pinnacle Street, Suite C
Charlotte Harbor, FL 33980

Subject: Support for West Coast Inland Navigation District's state funding request from Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota, and Manatee Counties.

Honorable Representative Grant,

As you know, the West Coast Inland Navigation District is a multi-county special taxing body, covering Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, and Lee counties, encompassing an estimated 1.8 million people. WCIND plays a pivotal role in the waterway projects that promote safe navigation from the Gulf of Mexico or the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) to the systems of secondary waterways that support boating, fishing, and beach-oriented projects. WCIND supports county and local governments in maintaining and enhancing: public navigation channels and inlets, boating access facilities, waterfront parks, and piers and special structures.

The Board of County Commissioners for Lee, Charlotte, Sarasota and Manatee Counties have all included a state funding request by the West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND) as part of their 2021 Legislative Platform.

Since its inception in 1947, WCIND has never owned a facility to adequately meet its operational needs. The District has operated out of rented space (including hotel rooms) or has purchased space in existing buildings designed for other purposes. Due to its age and spatial limitations, the existing office facility is no longer able to meet the needs of the District. The building currently occupied by WCIND was constructed in 1965 as a print shop for a local newspaper. It contains just enough space for records storage and desk space for the District employees. Any and all District Board meetings, inter-agency training sessions, public hearings, and State required public meetings must be held in rented or borrowed space subject to availability.

All four of the West Coast Inland Navigation District Member Counties support WCIND's state funding allocation request for \$2 million to construct a new 4,500 square-foot operations facility in Sarasota County. This new facility will provide much needed agency-specific public meeting space and office space for employees with room for

NOTE: This letter previously brought before the Board on 9/15/20, but never returned fully-executed (see BC20200915DOC079 and BCC 11/9/21 action)

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future growth. The facility will also enhance communications and operational ability allowing the District to better serve its member counties and regional partners.

WCIND is providing matching funds in the form of a Siting Study, the Architectural Design and Permitting, construction of the associated facilities building, and the value of the land where the building is to be constructed. Total value of WCIND's matching contributions toward the new operations facility is \$4,228,666.00.

We sincerely hope that the State will support the West Coast Inland Navigation District's funding request for construction of a new operations facility.

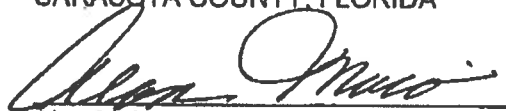
Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



Kevin Ruane
Chair

BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA



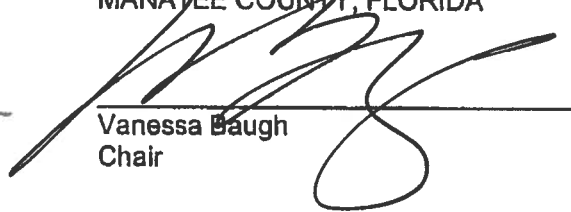
Alan Maio
Chair

BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
CHARLOTTE COUNTY, FLORIDA



Bill Truex
Chair

BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA



Vanessa Baugh
Chair

CC: Senator Joe Gruters, Senate District 23
Senator Ben Albritton, Senate District 26
Lee County Commission
Charlotte County Commission
Sarasota County Commission
Manatee County Commission
Justin McBride, Executive Director, WCIND