EVERGLADES COALITION

Resolution Opposing Provisions of Federal Legislation (S. 5653) That Curtails Foundational Environmental Safeguards Necessary to Restore and Protect the Greater Everglades Ecosystem

WHEREAS, federal, state, local, and private partners have dedicated more than 25 years and billions of dollars to restoring the Everglades;

WHEREAS, the lifeblood of the Everglades is an enduring flow of clean, fresh water from central Florida south to Florida Bay;

WHEREAS, the Everglades are home to biodiverse ecosystems that support more than 70 endangered and threatened species, including the endangered Florida panther and threatened American crocodile;

WHEREAS, the health and integrity of the Greater Everglades Ecosystem depend on strong federal protections for the water, land, and biodiversity in south Florida;

WHEREAS, the National Environmental Policy Act is considered the "Magna Carta" of environmental law in the United States, requiring federal agencies to carefully consider the environmental consequences and less damaging alternatives before taking action;

WHEREAS, the Endangered Species Act "represent[s] the most comprehensive legislation for the preservation of endangered species ever enacted by any nation," [1] and is responsible for preventing the extinction of 99% of the species under its care and guiding hundreds more toward recovery; [2]

WHEREAS, the Clean Water Act is the primary federal law regulating water pollution and the quality of our Nation's waters, created by Congress to "restore and maintain the chemical physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters" ;[3]

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2026, Senators Martin Heinrich, Mike Lee, Shelley Moore Capito, and Sheldon Whitehouse introduced U.S. Senate Bill 5653;

---

[1] *Tenn. Valley Auth. v. Hill*, 437 U.S. 153, 180 (1978).
[2] Greenwald, N., et al., 2019. Extinction and the US endangered species act. *PeerJ*, *7*, p.e6803.
[3] 33 U.S.C. § 1251(a).

EVERGLADES COALITION

WHEREAS, proposed revisions to the National Environmental Policy Act would, among other changes, exempt many significant federal actions from environmental review, restrict the range of less environmentally damaging alternatives federal agencies must consider, and limit citizen oversight and enforcement of the law;

WHEREAS, proposed revisions to the Endangered Species Act would, among other changes, allow delegation of endangered species consultations to state agencies that are ill-equipped to ensure the survival and recovery of endangered species, paralyze agency wildlife experts' evaluation of scientific data by limiting their ability to account for uncertainty and reasonably foreseeable risks, and limit citizen oversight and enforcement of the law;

WHEREAS, proposed revisions to the Clean Water Act would, among other changes, limit states' and tribes' ability to object to or require protective conditions for polluting projects, restrict the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to veto certain wetland-destroying projects, and curtail citizen oversight and enforcement of the law;

WHEREAS, the bill would fundamentally weaken our nation's foundational environmental protections if passed into law;

WHEREAS, habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and species extinction are accelerating at unprecedented rates,[4] and now is the time to strengthen—not weaken—our nation's most vital environmental protections.

WHEREAS, the success of Everglades restoration depends on common sense environmental review and permitting that safeguard our nation's investment in this globally unique natural landscape;

---

[4] See IPBES (2019). Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. IPBES secretariat, Bonn; Finn, C., Grattarola, F., & Pincheira-Donoso, D. (2023). More losers than winners: investigating Anthropocene defaunation through the diversity of population trends. Biological Reviews.

EVERGLADES COALITION

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Everglades Coalition, representing more than 60 local, state, and national conservation and environmental organizations dedicated to restoring and protecting America's Everglades with a 12.2-million-constituent network of followers, strongly opposes provisions of U.S. Senate Bill 5653 that would fundamentally weaken cornerstone environmental protections.

Sincerely,

Mark Perry
Co-Chair

Lauren Jonaitis
Co-Chair