

From: [Peel, Jackson](#)
To: [FLHouseDems](#)
Subject: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Governor Signs Bill to Accelerate Upgrades to South Florida's Aging Flood Control System
Date: Friday, May 27, 2022 1:56:07 PM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 27, 2022

CONTACT

Thomas Wilmouth
Office of Representative Robin Bartleman
Thomas.Wilmouth@myfloridahouse.gov
(954) 424-6829

Governor Signs Bill to Accelerate Upgrades to South Florida's Aging Flood Control System

Tallahassee, Fla – Yesterday, Governor signed into law [HB 513 /SB 1326](#), championed by **Representative Robin Bartleman (D-Weston)**, **Representative Demi Busatta Cabrera (R- Coral Gables)** and **Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez (R- Homestead)**. The legislation establishes a comprehensive study of the infrastructural needs and funding gaps of the Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Flood Control Project.

The C&SF Project protects South Florida's 11 million residents, its economy, and the South Florida Aquifer, and maintains the well-being of the Everglades. However, the C&SF Project is currently under substantial stress due to more intense rainfall and rising sea levels, and requires reevaluation focused on existing and future conditions.

“Sea level rise is a threat for communities across Florida and not just those nearest the coast. This legislation recognizes and prioritizes a flood control system that protects the homes, businesses, and lives of millions of everyday Floridians,” said **Kate Wesner**, Florida Director of the American Flood Coalition.

The population served by the C&SF Project is expected to grow to 15 million over the next 30 years. Southeast Florida has an annual GDP of \$359 billion, according to the [Business Case for Resilience in Southeast Florida Study](#) conducted by the Urban Land Institute, which also projects significant decreases in jobs, lost sales and tourism revenues due to the negative impacts of unaddressed sea level rise. In a no-action scenario, flooding from sea level rise in coming decades could result in more than \$4.2 billion in property value loss, including property damages due to storm events.

[\[View the WSVN report on this issue\]](#)

[\[Read the Sun Sentinel article on this issue\]](#)

“South Florida has always been my home,” said **Representative Bartleman**, “and this law takes decisive action to protect our community for the generations to come. The successful operation of our flood control system is critical to daily life in South Florida and even today the system is being challenged. We must adapt to rising sea levels and enhance flood protection to protect our 11 million residents and one-third

of Florida's economy by retrofitting and retooling our water management infrastructure. This legislation is a necessary component of Florida's historic investments in flood resilience. I am grateful to Governor DeSantis for supporting this effort."

"I am proud Governor DeSantis signed this bipartisan legislation into law. Sea level rise is a complex issue and it is critical that we devote the necessary resources to address it. The report that this bill creates will keep Florida's government informed on how to move forward on this issue," said **Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez**

House Prime Co-Sponsor, **Representative Demi Busatta Cabrera**, added, "South Floridians rely on the flood control system to protect them each and every day. It is vital infrastructure that is at the foundation of the health and safety of our community. This legislation sends a beacon from Tallahassee that this important system must be upgraded and prioritized."

Under current law, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is required to annually publish, by September 1, a Sea Level Rise and Flood Resilience Plan. **HB 513/ SB 1326** directs the SFWMD to consolidate the portions of the Plan related to the C&SF Resiliency Study and submit the document to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Governor, the Senate President, and Speaker of the House by October 1, annually. The success of the C&SF System is dependent on continued financial and policy investments in flooding and sea level rise by the Florida Legislature.

"The Central and Southern Florida (C&SF) Flood Control Project is the backbone of South Florida's flood protection, holding \$198.5 billion in taxable value in Broward County alone, yet this system is under serious stress and necessitates greater investment and oversight," said **Broward County Mayor Michael Udine**. "Thank you to Representative Bartleman, Senator Rodriguez, Representative Busatta Cabrera, and our numerous cosponsors on both sides of the aisle for their commitment to this issue and to the entire Florida Legislature for taking action against the realities of flooding and sea level rise."

###