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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1902

June 9, 2016

Mr. Jonathan Steverson
Secretary, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Secretary Steverson,

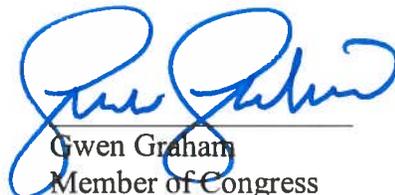
I write to you today to voice my strong opposition to the proposed changes to lower Florida's water quality standards. I am concerned that weakening restrictions on toxic chemicals in Florida's surface waters, as proposed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, will negatively impact the overall quality of our state's waters, as well as hurt many Floridians whose livelihoods depend on these waters. I urge you to heed our concerns and reconsider these proposed changes.

As we've recently witnessed in Flint, Michigan, a community's health is closely tied to its water quality. In Florida, we're even more dependent on our waters, where they not only serve as a source for household plumbing, but are also vital to our unique way of life. Our state's economy is dependent on Floridians and visitors to our state having confidence to eat from and recreate in our many lakes, rivers, springs and coastal waters. I find it inconceivable that the department charged with protecting our environment would ease restrictions on dangerous chemicals that threaten the health of Florida's waters and the people and industries that depend on them. We should be doing all we can to protect our most valuable asset, not make it easier to pollute.

I also worry the proposed changes could pave the way for hydraulic fracturing in Florida. Much is still unknown about the potential negative impacts of hydraulic fracturing on our state's unique hydrology— but it is clear that Floridians oppose expanding such risky drilling practices in our state. Water quality standards are meant to protect against such harmful practices, and we must ensure such protections remain in place.

Contamination of our waters threatens the health of our communities, our economy and our environment. I urge you to give these concerns your full and timely consideration and to reconsider any proposal that would weaken Florida's water quality standards.

Sincerely,



Gwen Graham
Member of Congress