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May 16, 2016

SENT VIA FACSIMILE AND U.S. MAIL

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth H.O.B
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
233 Cannon H.O.B.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Request for funding to defeat Zika virus

Dear Speaker and Leaders:

Composed of more than 100 companies with over 600,000 employees, the Florida Council of 100 is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of business and civic leaders, which exists to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of all Floridians through the relentless pursuit of better, business-driven public policy. Formed in 1961, the Council was the first of its kind in the United States, and we work with the Governor, the Legislature, federal leaders and officials, and other private organizations, to further our mission.

The Council of 100 just concluded its semi-annual meeting in Washington, D.C., where we heard from ten key members of Florida's congressional delegation. Though these leaders represent diverse districts spanning the state, one message was consistent – the Zika virus must be fought with all possible intensity now in order to prevent possible future health and economic impacts to Floridians.

In other areas of the world, the Zika virus has been shown to cause birth defects and debilitating health problems, thus potentially risking harm to





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the future lives and livelihoods of Americans, in general, and Florida residents, more specifically. As aptly stated by Florida Governor Rick Scott, “We don’t yet know for certain what will happen with this virus, but we owe our citizens a vigorous and thorough preparation effort at the federal level to best protect their health.”

Additionally, the Zika virus might one day pose difficulties for a Florida tourism industry that attracted 105 million visitors last year, generating \$89 billion and 1.2 million jobs for our economy. Well-founded or not with regard to Florida, Zika-related fear, uncertainty, and doubt about traveling to the Sunshine State could affect Florida’s robust economic recovery and undermine a key commercial sector. And, while the Council of 100 has always called for federal fiscal discipline, the Zika virus clearly represents a public health priority for a warm-weather, water-rich state like Florida, which can be conducive at times to mosquito breeding.

The Council of 100 therefore commends Florida’s leaders for strongly advocating for federal assistance in the face of this important issue and calls for fiscally responsible federal action that expeditiously appropriates emergency funds to help Florida and other affected states combat the Zika virus. Simply put, prompt, comprehensive action is necessary if we are to mitigate and minimize the Zika virus’s potential impact on Florida.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Florida Council of 100 with any thoughts or questions. We stand ready to help federal, state, and local stakeholders in the fight to prepare for and fight against this serious disease.

Sincerely,

Rhea F. Law
Chair, Florida Council of 100

cc: The Honorable Barak Obama, President of the United States
The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor, State of Florida
The Honorable Marco Rubio, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Bill Nelson, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives



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The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, Committee on
Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives
Florida Congressional Delegation, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Jeff Miller
The Honorable Gwen Graham
The Honorable Ted Yoho
The Honorable Ander Crenshaw
The Honorable Corrine Brown
The Honorable Ron DeSantis
The Honorable John Mica
The Honorable Bill Posey
The Honorable Alan Grayson
The Honorable Daniel Webster
The Honorable Richard Nugent
The Honorable Gus Bilirakis
The Honorable David Jolly
The Honorable Kathy Castor
The Honorable Dennis Ross
The Honorable Vern Buchanan
The Honorable Thomas Rooney
The Honorable Patrick Murphy
The Honorable Curt Clawson
The Honorable Alcee Hastings
The Honorable Ted Deutch
The Honorable Lois Frankel
The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
The Honorable Frederica Wilson
The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
The Honorable Carlos Curbelo
The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

The Honorable Andy Gardiner, President, Florida Senate
The Honorable Steve Crisafulli, Speaker, Florida House of
Representatives

The Honorable Joe Negron, President-designate, Florida Senate
The Honorable Richard Corcoran, Speaker-designate, Florida
House of Representatives