



Office of the Mayor and Town Council

Peggy R. Bell
Mayor

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Town Council
From: Mayor Peggy R. Bell
Date: February 15, 2017
Re: Opposing Weakening of Human Health Protections-Water Quality Criteria

REQUEST

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, AFFIRMING THE TOWN'S OPPOSITION TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION COMMISSION'S WEAKENING OF HUMAN HEALTH PROTECTIONS THROUGH NEW HUMAN HEALTH-BASED WATER QUALITY CRITERIA FOR OUR WATERS; URGING THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO NOT APPROVE FLORIDA'S PROPOSED HUMAN HEALTH-BASED WATER QUALITY CRITERIA; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Town of Cutler Bay strives to provide its residents and visitors with clean water for all uses and activities as clean water is vital to the health of Florida's environment, citizens, and economy.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is Florida's lead agency for environmental management, and has obligations that include protecting Florida's water and land. In 2016, the Florida Environmental Regulation Commission, voted to approve a proposal from DEP for Human Health-Based Water Quality Criteria (HHWQC) that would weaken the restrictions on the allowable levels of more than two (2) dozen toxic chemicals that may be released in Florida's lakes, streams, and coastal waters through revisions to Chapter 62-302 and 62-303 of the Florida Administrative Code.

The weakening of Florida's water quality criteria will encourage more industrial discharge including new highly polluting industrial activities such as oil and gas drilling, to locate in Florida hindering the safety of our State waters and the public. Additionally, the higher levels of toxic chemicals, such as Benzene, in Florida's waters will likely result in more pain and suffering as well as higher health care costs from diseases such as cancer, leukemia, nervous and immune system disorders, birth defects and other serious diseases.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Town Council join me in opposing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's proposed Human Health Toxic Criteria and urge the United States Environmental Protection Agency to reject Florida's Human Health-Based Water Quality Criteria.

