

## **Proclamation: Fracking & Oil-Drilling in the Everglades**

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Everglades is one of the world's most unique ecosystems, having been designated as a World Heritage Site and a Wetland of International Significance; and

**WHEREAS**, the Everglades is home to twenty-three endangered and threatened species, is the largest designated wilderness in the eastern United States, and is the only subtropical preserve on the North American continent; and

**WHEREAS**, the Everglades is the predominant water recharge area for the entirety of South Florida, an area populated by more than 7 million residents, the fourth most populous urban concentration in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, water is the lifeblood of Florida, access to clean water is a matter of significant public concern, and the endangerment of water sources would constitute a public health crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, the practices of oil drilling, hydraulic fracturing, matrix acidizing, and other forms of fossil fuel exploration pose a clear and demonstrated threat to the environments in which they take place, having resulted in thousands of spills of millions of gallons of fossil fuels and byproducts just since 2000, with toxic contaminants from spills persisting for years; and

**WHEREAS**, the threat to clean water sources on which the lives of Floridians rely, as well as the threat to agriculture and Florida's environment, outweighs the minimal potential returns from energy exploration in the Florida Everglades;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Nicole Fried, Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Florida, do hereby encourage Florida legislators to prohibit fracking-related practices throughout Florida, to prohibit the expansion of oil drilling in the Florida Everglades, and to preserve the Florida Everglades as a source of clean water on which agriculture, biodiversity, and human life in Florida relies.