



State of Florida

September 15, 2010

Mr. Kenneth R. Feinberg
Feinberg Rozen, LLP
The Willard Office Building
1455 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 390
Washington, D.C. 20004-1008

Dear Mr. Feinberg:

Thank you for your visit to Tallahassee this week to discuss the issues surrounding the administration of the Gulf Coast Claims Facility (GCCF). As you know, Floridians are anxious to recover their damages from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and we appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you the concerns of Floridians who have suffered as a result of this disaster.

Floridians continue to tell us that they cannot get their claims paid in a timely fashion. Many Floridians who have been impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill need immediate relief just to make their next mortgage payment or make their next payroll. The delay and the confusion in processing these claims is having a real impact on the lives of Floridians, and is adversely affecting our state's ability to quickly recover economically from the impact of the oil spill.

The claims process carried out through the GCCF must become seamless and simple. Floridians who depend on the Gulf of Mexico for their livelihood report the troubles they have encountered with the new claims process. The claims process must be modified to make it easy to understand so that Floridians and small-business owners alike can file claims without the help of legal counsel. Testimony at our most recent Gulf Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force meeting revealed that Floridians, including a task force member, are experiencing difficulty, confusion and delay at claims facilities.

Despite your initial assurances that claims would be evaluated and paid within 48 hours, the claims turn-around time is taking much longer. We ask you to immediately hire additional staff and resources so that all legitimate emergency claims can be processed much more expeditiously – and certainly within three to five days of their filing.

In addition, our Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force has received reports from Florida's legal team, led by Attorney General Bill McCollum and former Attorneys General Butterworth and Smith, of several instances where GCCF protocols are in direct contradiction with the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The discrepancies create a claims process we cannot support. A standard more restrictive than federal law may create scenarios where many Florida citizens, businesses, and governments go uncompensated for damages resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.


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The Deepwater Horizon oil spill will have long-lasting impacts for all Floridians. It is essential that the damage already done to Florida's economy and environment not be compounded by a slow and restrictive claims process. To that end, we ask you to join us in the next meeting of the Florida Cabinet or Florida's Oil Spill Economic Recovery Task Force to address concerns about the protocols, claims process, and eligibility requirements.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist
Governor



Alex Sink
Chief Financial Officer