

BULLSUGAR.ORG 2018 FLORIDA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1) In 1995, Floridians established Art. II, § 7 of the Florida Constitution, requiring the sugar industry to clean up its own pollution in the Everglades Agricultural Area. In a 1997 advisory opinion, the Florida Supreme Court stated that the Florida legislature must enact legislation to implement the will of Floridians. The legislature refused. **Do you agree that industries should not be allowed to dump polluted water onto neighboring properties and should pay their fair share of cleanup costs?** ___ Yes ___ No

2) In 1997, the federal and state governments purchased 52,000 acres of land in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), known as the Talisman Tract, to build a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee to cut coastal discharges. Instead this land is now being primarily used to treat runoff from sugar fields. Additionally the State of Florida continues to rent approximately 18,000 acres of public land to sugar companies in long-term, non-competitive leases. **Do you agree that taxpayer-owned land should be used for the public interest?** ___ Yes ___ No

3) The US Army Corps of Engineers and independent analysts have determined that the Herbert Hoover Dike is at risk of failing. Accredited scientists agree that Lake Okeechobee discharges into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers transport and trigger toxic algae blooms, which the World Health Organization and independent medical research has linked to elevated risks for cancers, Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, ALS, liver failure, and respiratory problems. Additionally medical studies have determined that exposure to smoke from sugarcane burning increases cancer, heart disease, and asthma risks. Despite these risks to human health and safety, Florida's water managers and their federal partners routinely allow Lake Okeechobee to reach dangerous levels and discharge excess water to waterside communities; meanwhile Florida permits sugarcane burning near population centers. **Do you agree that human health and safety are a higher order of priority than sugarcane production and that Florida's government must change policies that jeopardize human health and safety?** ___ Yes ___ No

4) The Florida sugar industry steered nearly \$60 million to candidates in state and local elections between 1994 and 2016, according to the *Miami Herald*, which reported "on issue after issue, regulators, legislators, and governors have erred on the side of softening the impact of adverse rules and regulations on cane growers..." which increased pollution and shifted cleanup costs to taxpayers. **Do you agree that your campaign will be sugar-free, accepting no contributions from any source with ties to the sugarcane industry?** ___ Yes ___ No

FEDERAL CANDIDATES ONLY

5A) The guarantees provided by the U.S. sugar program for domestic producers are an extraordinary deal for private companies at the expense of U.S. citizens and the Everglades. U.S. consumers pay well above the world price for sugar, and in turn the sugar industry spends more on lobbying than any other domestic commodity crop. As a result, sugarcane farmers in the Everglades Agricultural Area have a government guarantee for: the price of their product, crop insurance, water supply for their crops, drainage of their lands, and cleanup of their pollution; all financed by taxpayers while Florida's estuaries and a National Park--and the people and businesses that depend on them--bear all the risk. That's not what the federal sugar program was designed for. **Do you support reform of the federal sugar program to support American consumers, businesses, and the Everglades?** ___ Yes ___ No

STATE CANDIDATES ONLY

5B) The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) makes policy and decisions that affect the lives and livelihoods of millions of Floridians, the health of three estuaries and a National Park, and Miami-Dade's drinking water supply. But district appointees have been unable or unwilling to make science-supported, unbiased water management decisions. For example, the executive director refused to cooperate with the National Academies of Sciences after they raised questions about the district's Everglades restoration plans; the current executive refused to discuss the district's allowing a sugar industry lobbyist to re-write pollution rules, claiming to a Florida senator he didn't remember the incident or the news coverage that reported it; the current general counsel threatened to sue citizens making public records requests about a settlement with a private industry; and the district's advisory board, facing accusations of Sunshine Law violations, adjusted its name to avoid investigation. **Do you agree that water management district appointees should demonstrate expertise, experience, and commitment to represent all stakeholders, and that district boards should be fairly balanced between industry and representatives for the Everglades, for the estuaries, and for clean water?** ___ Yes ___ No