



# CITY OF STUART PRESS RELEASE

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## **Senator Rubio and Congressman Mast announce funding measures combating blue-green algae**

**Stuart, FL** – On July 31<sup>st</sup>, Mayor Kelli Glass Leighton received a notice from U.S. Senator Marco Rubio announcing that he has filed an amendment to a federal spending package requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to “use *at least* \$5,000,000 from their research budget to investigate the health impacts of harmful algal bloom toxin exposure, and to develop new methods to monitor, characterize, and predict dangerous blooms.” The amendment also requires the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to “use *no less than* \$200,000 to better understand why some blooms become more toxic than others.”

This research may help officials more effectively discern the dangers associated with blue-green algae while identifying potential ways to limit their impact. The amendment is expected to be voted on in the Senate later this week.

Additionally, Congressman Brian Mast has announced that he has filed a new bill in the U.S. House of Representatives reauthorizing the “Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998.” The new bill would provide federal funding to local communities for research and mitigation of blue-green algae through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). It would also require an assessment and action plan for reducing harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in the Greater Everglades region.

“While we understand that a lot more is needed to resolve this crisis, we are pleased that additional federal and state funds are being sought by our representatives for both short term solutions and long term research,” says Interim City Manager David Dyess.

The City of Stuart is also collaborating with local partners and other agencies in identifying potential applications of recently announced emergency grant funding through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

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