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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0918

April 28, 2021

Mayor Keith Babb
City of Pahokee
207 Begonia Drive
Pahokee, FL 33476

Dear Mayor Babb:

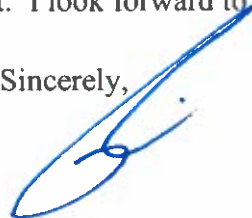
I am writing to raise concerns about the safety of citizens in Pahokee and to offer my support as we all work together to address the unacceptable threat to public health caused by excessive pollution in Florida's waterways.

As you know, the algal bloom at the Pahokee Marina tested more than 107 times too toxic for human contact based on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recreational water quality standard. Water that tests above the EPA's guidance can cause liver failure, kidney damage, pneumonia and even death when ingested. Additionally, a study published by scientists at the University of Florida last year found that HAB toxins such as microcystin can, in their aerosolized forms, travel approximately 10 miles from the bloom source by air.¹

I am, therefore, writing to urge you to provide alternative housing options to all residents residing within close proximity to the Pahokee Marina and to limit access to the Marina until the water is determined to be safe again.

I am ready to help in any way possible to assist you and the City of Pahokee in keeping residents and visitors safe from this toxic threat. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Sincerely,



Brian Mast
Member of Congress

¹ Atmospheric Progression of Microcystin-LR from Cyanobacterial Aerosols
Myoseon Jang, David E. Berthold, Zechen Yu, Cecilia Silva-Sanchez, H. Dail Laughinghouse IV, Nancy D. Denslow, and Sanghee Han
Environmental Science & Technology Letters 2020 7 (10), 740-745
DOI: 10.1021/acs.estlett.0c00464