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## Cleaning up waterways should be priority, Martin legislators are told

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STUART — Some residents are tired of the many ineffectual studies on Lake Okeechobee water quality and want state officials to take action to restore area waterways.

"Having our rivers continue to be used as a sewer is intolerable. The excuses for inaction is equally intolerable," said Nathaniel Reed, who once served on the board of the South Florida Water Management District.

Improving conditions of area waterways was a priority for some residents and officials who want it on the front-burner for local legislative delegates.

Martin County residents and more than 20 people representing local governments, agencies or groups addressed four state legislators Friday at the county Administrative Building regarding the environment, voting systems, social services and other concerns.

The delegation agreed more action is necessary from the state.

"Quite frankly, I've given up on the federal government," Pruitt said. "If we wait for them it will never happen."

Pruitt said the state has contributed more than \$1.6 billion, while the federal government has only provided \$100 million for Lake Okeechobee.

Pruitt said he will continue to push for more federal money, but if that doesn't come, state and local organizations will make up the difference.

### MARTIN COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

- Sen. Ken Pruitt, R-Port St. Lucie.
- Rep. William Snyder, R-Stuart.
- Rep. Gayle Harrell, R-Port St. Lucie.

- Richard Machek, D-Delray Beach.

## WHAT MARTIN COUNTY WANTS FROM LEGISLATORS

- Support for 50 percent of the money to build the Indian Street Bridge, the addition of Martin County in the Windstorm Insurance Pool, and backing for restoration and enhancement of the St. Lucie River and Estuary.
- Arthur Cox from the Manatee Pocket Bunch and Gail Byrd from the Florida Inland Navigational District asked for support for Manatee Pocket dredging. The removal of sediment in the shallow waters would help establish a navigational channel for a water highway through the pocket.
- The Martin County Sheriff's Office requested establishing a category on Florida driver's licenses or identification cards to indicate whether the bearer is a registered sexual predator or offender.
- Martin County School District Superintendent Sarah Wilcox asked for support for full state funding for hurricane recovery costs and money for additional classroom space to meet the state class-size reduction amendment.
- Ginger Stroke represented the Alliance for Freedom from Alimony to request support for a bill to amend Florida alimony laws, which allow for either permanent or rehabilitative support. Stroke would like to abolish lifetime alimony and keep rehabilitative support to three years.
- Supervisor of Elections Vicki Davis' requests included adding a paper trail for votes and implementing other procedures for a secure voting system.
- Robin Hicks-Connors represented the Historical Society of Martin County to ask for money for a cultural museum.
- Terry Tillman asked for assistance with noise in her neighborhood from off-road vehicles, whose riders use the sand dunes behind the Publix in Jensen Beach. But Sen. Ken Pruitt said that is an issue for the local police department. Pruitt said he would be happy to be the liaison with Martin County Sheriff Robert Crowder to resolve the matter.

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