

News
U.S. Rep. Adam Putnam (Fla.-12)
Central Florida: Hillsborough, Osceola and Polk counties

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Putnam: EPA delaying some new rules for Florida waters; calling for scientific review

WASHINGTON – Congressman Adam Putnam today welcomed an announcement from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that it will delay a portion of its new and complex rules for nutrients in Florida waters and will invite a third party scientific review of the standards.

“EPA promised to review the rigor of their science when they met with me and other members of the Florida congressional delegation earlier this month,” said Putnam. “It appears they may have known their science was lacking. This has been an example of the danger of them charging ahead on a tight deadline with thousands of technical standards for every Florida water body when Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Florida Water Management Districts don’t believe those standards are supported by science.”

In a letter to the Florida DEP, the EPA said it expects to delay implementation of “downstream protection values” for nutrients in waters until 2011 and that it will consult with the FDEP on the scope of the scientific review. The agency also said it expects to announce further details regarding the scientific review in April.

In February Putnam organized a letter to EPA from 20 members of Florida’s congressional delegation, calling for the agency to extend its comment period for the proposed rules, which are scheduled to begin going into effect later this year. In response, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson met with the Florida delegation earlier this month to discuss their concerns. “In that meeting it was clear that there was inadequate communication between the state and federal regulators. I urge Administrator Jackson to come to Florida and sit down with FDEP Secretary Michael Sole to see firsthand and better understand the issue from Florida’s perspective.”

Putnam noted that “Every single Floridian faces higher stormwater and sewer costs per month if the EPA’s numbers are adopted without better review. Thank goodness they seem willing to review the flaws in their science on this portion of the proposed rule, now let’s get the state regulators and federal regulators to work together on the best plan for our state. The EPA administrator should come to Florida to better understand this issue.

“I am especially grateful for the leadership from the rest of the Florida delegation. Both senators and a bipartisan group of House members are integrally involved in resolving this issue.”

Since 2001, Putnam has represented Florida’s 12th Congressional District, which includes most of Polk County and portions of Hillsborough and Osceola counties.