



REVEALED:

Brevard County Commission wastefully spends \$14.4 million on pork projects instead of fixing raw sewage runoff into the Indian River Lagoon.

BAD HABITS

- Brevard County Commission voted to spend **\$14.4 million** of hotel bed taxes on the following projects:
 - **\$7 million** for an “indoor multiuse sports arena and hotel project” in Titusville.
 - **\$5 million** for upgrades to the Viera Regional Park’s soccer and lacrosse fields.
 - **\$1.7 million** to expand a campground at Palm Bay Regional Park.
 - **\$500,000** for a “Keepers Cottage Museum” at the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse, and
 - **\$199,495** to upgrade a pier area in Indian Harbour Beach – located near where the 20 million gallons of sewage were deposited.
- **“At the same time they were releasing raw sewage into the Indian River Lagoon, the County Commission decided to spend \$14.4 million tax dollars on pork barrel projects. Instead of repairing and modernizing its sewage system, they decided to spend taxpayer money to make it easier for kayakers to paddle through the sewage”** said Representative Randy Fine.

A WEAK DEFENSE

- One commissioner alluded to the defense that these tax dollars are restricted, due to the fact that they come from hotel bed tax, and they do not know if they can be used for upgrades to the sewage system.
- Without exploring further if the hotel bed tax could be used to fix the sewage runoff, the Commission went ahead with these pork projects.
- Not until Representative Fine confronted the Commission about their irresponsible spending did they bring up the need to fix the Lagoon. A week after the commission meeting, Florida environmental regulators issued a warning that it would investigate possible violations of Florida laws to Brevard County after Hurricane Irma and subsequent rains overtaxed the county’s sewer plants, causing 20 million gallons of wastewater to be discharged.

MOVING FORWARD

- Representative Fine is actively pursuing legislation for the 2018 session that would clarify that hotel bed tax dollars can be spent on infrastructure so instances like this don’t arise in the future.
- **It should be an easy choice when faced with handing out money to vanity projects or stopping the millions of gallons of sewage being pumped into their waterways. Cities and counties should be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars – without calls to action from legislators or state regulators.**

READ MORE ABOUT THIS OUTRAGEOUS AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT HERE.

