

Remarks before the Bob Graham Center for Public Service
as the
2013 Citizen of the Year Award Winner
by Nathaniel Reed

Ladies and gentlemen - and you, my hero, the Honorable Bob Graham.

I wonder what I might say beyond: thank you:

Surprised, astonished, overwhelmed, possibly best---forever grateful!

Governor - Senator Bob Graham and I have worked collaboratively for more than 40 years.

I promised my wife that I would not carry on too long, but think of this.

As governor, Bob started the effort to save the Everglades. As senator he joined forces with Congressman Dante Fascell and in 1989 added 109,000 acres including the headwaters of the Shark River Slough to Everglades National Park, a great accomplishment.

Driven by his inspiration, the environmental community has worked ceaselessly since the passage in year 2000 of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan to arrive at a singular destination. The Everglades Foundation under Eric Eikenberg's brilliant direction and superb staff have moved mountains to have the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District's engineers work together to prepare the 'guts' of the Central Everglades Planning Project. In the history of Corps - South Florida Water Management projects, there has never been a period of such intense cooperation. Every interest, the Miccosukee's, the utilities, agriculture including Big Sugar has agreed that the project is essential to the recovery of the 'glades.

If the members of the Board of the South Florida Water Management District and Governor Scott are satisfied with the joint effort, the Board will vote to become the local sponsor at their July board meeting.

If everything follows as planned, the Chief of the Corps will approve the project before December 31st. Individual projects will be funded over a very long period of time as individual plans are developed and appropriations are received. Every member of the Florida congressional delegation supports the effort.

Let me reiterate: the Chief's report cannot be completed unless the water management board agrees to be its sponsor and then with the Chief's blessing, it can be included in the Water Resources Development Act that is being prepared by congressional committees as I speak.

My friends, this is the key moment that Bob Graham and I with the assistance of thousands of everglades passionate devotees have been working for since Marjory Stoneman Douglas said: "Let's save the everglades - the River of Grass! It's unique, irreplaceable and needs loving care! The everglades don't 'belong to Florida'—they are the American Everglades". Marjory, we hear you!

If we miss this window of opportunity, I have no doubt that the loss of 7 years before the next WRDA Act will mean untold damage of what remains of the original everglades.

Governor Bob Graham, deeply concerned about the all too rapid often thoughtless growth of every corner of Florida successfully urged the Florida Legislature to create the Department of Community Affairs.

Just as Governor Tom McCall did in creating 1000 Friends of Oregon to keep any eye on his greatest achievement - the Oregon Land Use Planning Act, Bob urged Buddy McKay and me to create 1000 Friends of Florida to keep an eye on the development of the Department of Community Affairs. 1000 Friends has had a great run under the capable leadership of Charles Pattison and our present Chairman, Timothy Jackson.

The Department was starved to near death by Governor Bush and destroyed by Governor Scott. When I look over the names of great Floridians, some 64 who have served on the 1000 Friends board: I recognize that they represent the very brightest and best, thoughtful Floridians who want our state to sensibly control its growth and develop livable communities protecting wetlands and unique lands. I and my fellow Floridians will never be adequately able to thank them for service on the Board.

Another governor will recreate a Department of Community Affairs and even improve its authority to prevent land use catastrophes. 1000 Friends is ready and willing to help create an improved Department. We cannot abdicate our joint responsibilities to foster growth, but manage its consequences. It's a simple question of 'when'.

Now we all face an extraordinary opportunity: one of those chances that come perhaps once in a lifetime. Bob is giving 100% to create an effective Florida Conservation Coalition that is desperately needed to avoid future legislative sessions dominated by Big AG and their allies, the developers, the speculators and the polluters who overwhelmed the conservation interests by a team effort by lobbyists and hundreds of thousands of dollars of campaign contributions.

We must stake our state's future to strict campaign funding reform. This state must grow up and face its constituents who are tired of the news that our legislature is 'bought'!

Of equal importance, second only to everglades restoration is the incredible opportunity to pass the Water and Land Conservation Amendment that could change Florida forever.

With adequate funding both lands in fee and by easements can be acquired to save the very best of what is left of our beloved Florida. If you have not signed a petition or made a donation to the effort, don't wait. [Go to Constitutional Amendment](#) We need names of registered voters and frankly, funds to hire expert signature acquirers. Seriously, this is one of those moments like the vote of the Board of the Water Management District that could change Florida for the better forever.

I'm finished! I will be working on these issues and others until I 'cross the river'.

I share with Bob Graham a love for this state, an abiding love that makes this evening memorable. Thank you for coming and assisting the Bob Graham Center.

Thank you for honoring me.

I thank my warrior, Bob Graham, and wish his Center continuing success.

Now, Bob, I wish to read a finale (quote by Teddy Roosevelt):

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again;

because there is not effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly.

So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”

Thank you and God Bless each of you!