



**CHARLIE CRIST**  
GOVERNOR

June 9, 2010

Mr. C. Steven Yerrid, Esquire  
The Yerrid Law Firm  
101 East Kennedy Boulevard  
Bank of America Plaza, Suite 3910  
Tampa, Florida 33602

Dear Mr. Yerrid:

At this time, Florida's economic and environmental future is threatened by the ongoing Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. As oil sheen and tar balls creep closer to Northwest Florida, our tourism and fishing industries and other coastal businesses, as well as the families and communities that depend on them, are suffering from devastating financial losses. In addition, with oil reportedly entering the loop current, the threat to Florida extends to all Gulf Coast counties and South Florida, from the Keys north to Palm Beach County.

With such devastating impacts to our coastal areas, we must explore and be prepared for all possible legal actions. While the federal government has clearly defined BP as the legally responsible party, as Floridians, we must begin preparing now to secure the economic and environmental future of the Sunshine State. I know that, as a member of the Cousteau Society for more than 20 years, you appreciate and understand the threat this oil spill extends to our state's coastal waters and, therefore, to Florida's economic future.

It is this threat to Florida's security that prompts me to call on you for help. Your expertise in maritime law is to be commended, including your successful defense of the harbor pilot involved in the 1980 Sunshine Skyway Bridge tragedy. In addition, your experience as part of the legal team that successfully negotiated the multi-year, \$11-billion settlement with the tobacco industry also demonstrates your legal skill.

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For those reasons, I am asking you to serve as Special Counsel to advise me pro bono as we work to secure justice for the people of Florida in relation to the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. I am confident you have the necessary talent and determination to help us develop strategies that will access the resources and bring about the reforms Florida needs. While it remains our hope to avoid litigation, I believe we must be prepared in the event legal action is needed. Obviously, the goal of such action would be to restore the people, businesses, industries and communities of Florida harmed in the wake of the potentially disastrous and unprecedented damage of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

As Governor, I cannot stand idly by while this threat looms off our shores. I am committed to protecting our businesses and people by preparing for all possible avenues to secure restoration for them and for all of Florida.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charlie Crist", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charlie Crist