

POINTS TO MAKE WHEN CONTACTING REPRESENTATIVES.

I am writing this letter in order to bring to your attention a serious problem the Citizens and ratepayers of the Cudjoe Regional Wastewater System are facing. Largely, without our general knowledge, or that of the Monroe County Commission, the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA), has designed a sewer system that is likely to be expensive in the long run, a potential environmental disaster, and contrary to the will of the people. Instead of a gravity system we were promised, with some alternatives for remote areas, we are getting a system that includes over 30% low pressure grinder pumps. In some dense subdivisions the percentage is over 40%.

There appears to be an insidious problem within FKAA that only our state government, regulatory and law enforcement officials can address.

- FKAA's engineers and their consultants used flawed analysis to support the level of grinder pumps being purchased.
- The grinder pumps are being procured from a local distributor through what can only be described as sole source bid specifications.
- The incremental cost of these grinder pumps is likely to be \$40 million or more over the next 50 years, if the system even lasts that long before failure.
- FKAA intentionally deceived the citizens in the CRWS during public hearings required by the Florida DEP to secure \$90 million in bonds. The filing with the Clerk of courts clearly indicated that we would be getting gravity in dense areas.
- FKAA expedited the construction schedule, in violation of the contract in place, and all public schedules, in order to complete work in neighborhoods being affected before the Courts could rule on the validity of the decisions.
- Finally, and perhaps most important, the Low Pressure System we are being forced to accept may be an environmental disaster. Pressurized sewage in High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) Pipe carries a real risk of failure due to both long term deterioration and mechanical disruption due to unstable coral in which it is imbedded or future excavation errors. Leaking sewage in our coral/limestone aquifer will go unseen until it shows up in nearby ocean waters. Despite the best intention of engineers and contractors, these lines will fail. The only question is when and with what consequences.

We need to stop this project right now and get the design corrected before irreparable damage is done. We also need an elected Board of Directors at FKAA. FKAA is a monolithic organization with no outside control; it answers to no one but the Governor. It sets its own rates without any intervention by the PSC, a consumer advocate or outside parties. It establishes its own policies and procedures by fiat. There is no transparency in any of its actions. In fact it simply disregards public information requests if it finds them troublesome.

Less than 12 months ago, the Citizens of Monroe County voted overwhelmingly to have an elected Board of Directors at FKAA. It was never brought to the Senate floor.