



**KEY COLONY BEACH, FLORIDA  
KEY COLONY BEACH BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RESOLUTION NO. 2021-17**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF KEY COLONY BEACH BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS IN SUPPORT OF THE FLORIDA FISH AND WIDLLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND ITS LAW ENFORMCENT OFFICERS, AND IN REQUEST OF AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF OFFICERS IN MONROE COUNTY.**

**WHEREAS**, Monroe County is home to Everglades National Park, Biscayne National Park, Dry Tortugas National Park, and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, each a national environmental treasure with uniquely important and diverse natural resources; and

**WHEREAS**, Monroe County is also home to Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge, Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge, and Key West National Wildlife Refuge; and

**WHEREAS**, the Federal and state governments have authorized and appropriated significant public investment in the restoration and preservation of Monroe County's ecosystem; and

**WHEREAS**, Monroe County continues to invest in and to work in partnership with state and federal agencies to protect the health of its unique marine environment,

**WHEREAS**, the sustained health and safety of Monroe's' marine refuges and nearshore water are vital to the tourist-based Florida Keys economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Monroe County's marine environment provides an unparalleled boating, fishing, and diving experience, attracting high numbers of recreational boaters, charter boats, commercial fishing vessels, liveaboard vessels, transient boaters, dive boats, personal watercraft, and kayaks, and contributing to the need for increasingly robust protective resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the highly active boating environment leads to a number of hazardous and environmentally damaging impacts including:



1) **Vessel groundings:** more than 300 vessel groundings are reported in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary every year, with 80% of these impacting the fragile seagrass habitat and damaging corals; and

2) **Boating accidents:** Monroe has the highest number of boating accidents in the State every year, and in 2020 Monroe once again led the State with 99 accidents and 9 fatalities; and

3) **Derelict vessels:** Monroe has the highest number of derelict vessels Statewide each year, and is currently on track for the removal of 60 derelict vessels this year; and

**WHEREAS,** without exception, existing FWC staff provides excellent and highly professional law enforcement service to Monroe County but could be strengthened by a staff increase; and

**WHEREAS,** FWC has the awesome responsibility for protecting the environmental resources of a 2,900 square mile expanse of the Florida Keys nearshore waters, 240 miles of coastline, and one of the most diverse and active boating environments in the State; and

**WHEREAS,** the provision and retention of FWC officers is vitally important to the ongoing protection of Monroe County's marine environment and the safety of Monroe's boating public; and

**WHEREAS,** Monroe County has the highest cost of living in the State of Florida a well-documented lack of affordable/workforce housing providing a significant affordability challenge for local FWC officers; and

**WHEREAS,** there are currently 15 vacant FWC officer positions in the Florida Keys; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Key Colony Beach urges FWC to direct increased resources for the protection of Monroe's marine environment, and to implement strategies to aid in the recruitment and retention of its officers such as sufficient pay consideration and/or housing allowance to account for the local high cost of living; and

**WHEREAS,** the continued environmental and economic viability of Florida Keys depends on the preservation of those environmental resources and on the continued protection of the quality, tranquility, and safety of our surrounding waters; and



**WHEREAS**, the Florida Keys' unique marine environment is a highly valuable economic engine in the State of Florida, generating over \$200M in sales tax each year, and worthy of increased State investment for its protection; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Key Colony Beach encourages the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to review the level of compensation for its law enforcement officers in a manner that provides for adequate housing while increasing the level of service needed for public safety and protection of environmental assets within the Florida Keys; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF KEY COLONY BEACH, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1.** The City of Key Colony Beach Board of Commissioners expresses its strong support for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and its law enforcement officers, and urges the State of Florida and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission to consider directing additional law enforcement resources to Monroe County; and

**Section 2.** The Clerk Is hereby authorized and directed to transmit certified copies of this Resolution to Governor DeSantis, Senator Ana Marie Rodrigues, Representative Jim Mooney, FWC Executive Director Eric Sutton, FWC Commissioners Robert Spottswood, Mike Sole, Rodney Barreto, Steven Hudson, Gary Lester, Gary Nicklaus, and Sonya Rood.

**Section 3.** This resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Commissioners of the City of Key Colony Beach, Florida, at a regular meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of November 2021,

Mayor Ron Sutton	<u>Yes</u>
Vice Mayor Patti Trefry	<u>yes</u>
Commissioner Kathryn McCullough	<u>yes</u>
Commissioner John DeNeale	<u>yes</u>
Commissioner Tom Harding	<u>yes</u>

BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE CITY OF KEY COLONY BEACH, FLORIDA

BY:   
Mayor Ron Sutton





(SEAL)

ATTEST: SILVIA GRANSEE, CLERK

  
CITY CLERK