

Dwyer



PHD

RECEIVED

MAY 10 1986

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR BOB GRAHAM

WASHINGTON OFFICE

May 13, 1986

Honorable William Lehman, M.C.
Seventeenth Florida District
2347 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Bill:

On several occasions, I have communicated to you my belief that the federal government should reimburse state governments for the costs of incarcerating Mariel Cuban felons currently held in state jails. Since the Administration's proposed FY 87 budget does not request any monies for a continuation of the existing program, I find it necessary to write you again on this issue.

Protection of our borders is a federal responsibility. It has been most notably discussed in terms of this nation's war on drugs, but it applies equally to the influx of illegal aliens and Mariel Cuban entrants. Since protection of our national sovereignty through border interdiction is a federal responsibility, failure to protect our borders is also a federal responsibility. The taxpayers of Florida should not have to bear the costs of a federal policy that has failed.

The Mariel Cuban felon situation is a case in point. Currently, there are 730 Mariel Cuban felons in Florida state institutions. The cost to Florida for housing and feeding these prisoners is approximately \$7.2 million per year. Yet Florida's share of the initial \$5 million appropriation was only \$2 million. Their inclusion in the Florida prison population has added to the crisis in jail overcrowding which may, despite my objections, result in release of some prisoners prior to completion of their sentences.

Since Radio Marti began broadcasting, Castro abrogated his agreement to take even a portion of these prisoners back, and since the federal facilities are full, these prisoners sit in Florida jails.

5

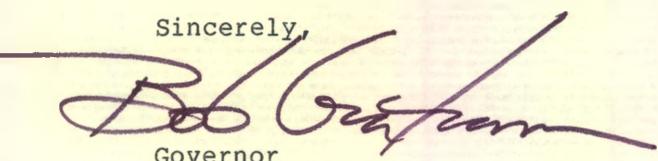
Page two
May 13, 1986

Congress is currently discussing a program of full reimbursement for states in the context of immigration reform legislation. However, the fate of that bill, and that particular provision, is still very much undecided. Therefore it is very important that the Congress continue to provide funds for FY 87 through the appropriations process.

Your help again in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,


Bob Graham

Governor