



# THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

## COMMITTEES:

Rules, *Chair*  
Appropriations  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Education  
Banking and Insurance  
Education  
Regulated Industries

## JOINT COMMITTEE:

Joint Legislative Budget Commission

**SENATOR KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO**

28th District

May 19, 2022

Dr. Timothy Parsons  
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer  
Division of Historical Resources  
500 South Bronough Street, Room 305  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Dear Dr. Parsons,

This is in support of the application submitted by the Everglades Society of Historic Preservation (ESHP) for the restoration and preservation of the Bank of Everglades in Everglades City, Florida.

There are three historic structures built in the 1920's in Everglades City that demonstrate a truly unique part of Florida history. All three buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. They include the *County Courthouse*, currently serving as City Hall, the *Laundry*, now housing the Museum of the Everglades and the *Bank of Everglades*. The Bank of Everglades building is the only building that has not been restored. The restoration of this structure would complete the trifecta of the history of Everglades City.

Collier County was created in 1923 by the Florida Legislature and the Bank of Everglades was chartered in that same year. Baron Gift Collier chose Everglades City to be the County seat as well as the engineering headquarters for the completion of the construction of Tamiami Trail across the Everglades to Miami.

For 36 years Bank of Everglades was the only bank in Collier County. In 1962, the bank assets were moved to Immokalee and since then the building has served as a boarding house, newspaper office and finally a bed and breakfast until 2016. In 2021, the building was donated to ESHP. Time and weather, including Hurricane Donna in 1960 and Hurricane Irma in 2017, exacted damage on an already compromised structure. ESHP has already begun the difficult task to bring it back to its original glory.

## REPLY TO:

- 3299 East Tamiami Trail, Suite 203, Naples, Florida 34112 (239) 417-6205
- 25 East Hickpoochee Avenue, Room J-101, LaBelle, Florida 33935 (863) 674-7122
- 400 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5028

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**WILTON SIMPSON**  
President of the Senate

**AARON BEAN**  
President Pro Tempore

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When completed this beautiful and historic building will serve as a visitors' center to welcome tourists, house a historic library and a community conference room. It will also offer a gallery for lectures and traveling exhibits, once again allowing this building to contribute to the vitality and community of Everglades City.

As Collier County celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2023, I ask you to give thoughtful consideration to this request. I believe it is essential to telling the story of the Everglades and Collier County to visitors and residents alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Passidomo', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kathleen C. Passidomo  
State Senator, District 28