



# NATIONAL SAVE THE SEA TURTLE FOUNDATION

*"Help Save A Life and Generate Hope For Our Endangered Species"*

July 12, 2018

The Honorable Don Gaetz, Chair  
Florida Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.  
P.O. Box 12007  
Tallahassee, FL 32317

Dear Senator Gaetz,

We are writing to you today to provide our support for Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratories, Inc. project for funding infrastructure upgrades and expansion for Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratory & Aquarium from the Florida Gulf Triumph Fund.

GSML seeks 3.9 million to fund much needed infrastructure upgrades and expansion of their 50 year old Marine Laboratory and Aquarium located in Panacea, FL. Expansion will include 8 new marine displays, a new turtle rehabilitation facility, holding pools, upgrades to seawater and filtrations systems and a new educational center that will provide interactive education for visiting schools and special programs on environmental education. Currently GSML host over 10,000 school children per year visiting on field trips from counties around the state and Georgia. Another 17,000 tourists come through the lab annually from all over the United States. With approved funding the GSML will be able to add 20-30 new jobs, expand the existing marine intern program to accommodate 72 students per year, from FSU, FAMU, TCC and Thomas University. In the first 3 years it is the Gulf Specimen Marine Lab's goal to triple their tourism impact to the town of Panacea adding much needed tourism dollars and economic stimulation to the local economy.

National Save The Sea Turtle Foundation, Inc. fully supports this application for funding and looks forward to the much needed long term economic and environmental impact this will have on the community.

Sincerely,

Frank Wojcik  
Executive Director

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