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**Senator Ileana Garcia and Representative Nick Duran
Introduce Legislation to Create a Specialty Tag to Help Save
the Biscayne Bay**

The funds from the specialty plate would be used to raise awareness and support the mission and efforts of conserving Biscayne Bay.

Tallahassee, FL - Today **Senator Ileana Garcia (R- Miami)** and **Representative Nicholas X. Duran (D- Miami)** filed legislation ([SB 860](#) and [HB 501](#), respectively) that would create the "Protect Biscayne Bay" specialty tag. The bill draws from regional examples of related, successful specialty plates for Indian River Lagoon and the Tampa Bay Estuary. Funds from the sale of the license plate will be directed to The Miami Foundation to administer toward initiatives supporting habitat restoration, pollution prevention and environmental education and awareness initiatives.

The bill follows on a recommendation of action the Biscayne Bay Task Force urged in its August 2020 final report to take to help save the Biscayne Bay. The health of Biscayne Bay remains in a state of emergency and at a tipping point toward irreversible ecological collapse. The bay watershed continues to be threatened by lack of fresh water, sewage pollution, storm water runoff and other pollutants.

Senator Garcia stated "Our economy is inextricably linked to the health of our environment and our water quality," said Garcia. "This license plate is a step in the right direction in our efforts to preserve and protect Biscayne Bay."

Representative Duran stated "Clean water is at the heart of our state and community's identity and continued prosperity. Our state has a role in the management of Biscayne Bay. A specialty license plate will help generate funding to help toward the goal of preserving, protecting and revitalizing Biscayne Bay. This has been successfully used in other parts of the state to help provide funding to protect other important bodies of water and I'd like to see that happen here with Biscayne Bay."

The Miami Foundation President and CEO, Rebecca Fishman Lipsey stated “A healthy Biscayne Bay is crucial to a healthy Miami-Dade. As our environmental jewel and an economic engine, Biscayne Bay is at the heart of our recovery as a community. Our Miami is fueled by tourism, real estate, and aquatic recreation like boating and fishing – all of which demand clean water and a clean Biscayne Bay. We must invest now to protect this natural resource not only for ourselves but for generations to come”

Biscayne Bay is a sub-tropical shallow estuary that is home to two state aquatic preserves, a critical wildlife area, a national park and national marine sanctuary. Due to its unique habitat, Biscayne Bay is designated an aquatic park and conservation area by Miami-Dade County. Cradled by the mainland to the west and barrier islands to the east, its 428 square miles continue to be a source of sustenance and economic vitality, while also providing for countless recreational opportunities enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Its spectacular natural beauty is widely recognized and enjoyed by nearly 2.8 million residents and millions of visitors every year.

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