



January 7, 2005

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BUREAU OF AIR REGULATION

Trina Vielhauer  
Bureau Chief  
Bureau of Air Regulation  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
2600 Blair Stone Road MS 5500  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

Dear Trina:

It was a pleasure meeting you and your staff at the Merrillat plant in Ocala in mid-December. I deeply appreciate the time and expertise you dedicated to this meeting.

Enterprise Florida, who was originally involved in the recruitment of this company to our state, has a keen interest in all issues which may impact the retention and expansion of this key industry. As was mentioned in the meeting, Florida originally almost lost this plant to another state and, subsequent to its opening in Ocala, the facility was considered for closure due to economic conditions. The fact that Merrillat-Ocala is fully operational and now considering a significant expansion, is a major economic development blessing for our state.

I understand and appreciate fully the process that must be followed to approve Merrillat's air permit. Obviously, as was articulated by the company, the timing and conditions of this permit will play a significant role in their ultimate decision whether or not to proceed with this expansion in Ocala. Thus, I think it is important that all parties proceed in partnership and cooperation to find mutually-acceptable solutions in the most expeditious way possible.

Some of the comments made at the meeting by your staff (and some relayed to me secondhand), I must admit, did not reveal a spirit of partnership for which I had hoped. Perhaps the most frustrating for me was the initial conclusion made by your staff that Merrillat-Ocala has been a continuous, "phased project." The facts presented by the company, coupled with Enterprise Florida's collective knowledge of this project, simply do not support this conclusion. Regardless of whether or not this expansion is subject to PSD, this comment and apparent conclusion unfairly and unnecessarily questions the motivations and credibility of this company.

In the spirit of building a stronger partnership and working relationship, I would like to request an in-person meeting with you. I've had the pleasure of working with the Bureau of Air Regulation in the past (Al Linero has been most helpful), and I would like the opportunity

Governor Jeb Bush, Chairman • Bill Habermeyer, Vice Chairman • Darrell Kelley, President & CEO

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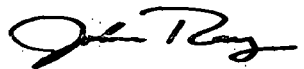


Trina Vielhauer  
January 7, 2005  
Page Two

to share with you some information about Enterprise Florida, as well as to discuss generally issues surrounding the Merillat-Ocala project. I will give you a call in the next several days to schedule a meeting at your offices.

Again, thank you for your consideration of this meeting. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. Ray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Ray" clearly distinguishable.

John B. Ray  
Vice President