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MARTIN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

Via mail

December 9, 2019

Honorable House Speaker Jose Oliva
Florida House of Representatives
422 The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**RE: Strong Support for Legislative Funding of the
Division of Historical Resources Grant Program for
Replacement of Seawall at Tuckahoe Mansion**

Dear Speaker Oliva:

In September 2019, Martin County's application to the Florida Division of Historical Resources Special Category Grant program to replace the seawall at the Tuckahoe Mansion was reviewed and ranked twenty-seven out of fifty-seven applications with a total score of 82.62 points. The ranked list of applicants has been submitted to the Governor and State Legislature for funding.

I write on behalf of the Martin County Historic Preservation Board asking you to fund this program during your budgeting process. We strongly support Martin County's efforts to replace the seawall at the Tuckahoe Mansion. Constructed in 1939, Tuckahoe (a Cherokee word meaning "welcome") is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was the home of Willaford Ransom Leach and his Coca-Cola heiress wife Anne Bates Leach. The house and two other contributing resources occupy a portion of Indian RiverSide Park. Overlooking the Indian River Lagoon, Tuckahoe is located on the highest point of the Mount Elizabeth Archeological Site, a 29-foot high coastal shell mound that dates from 2000 BC. Martin County seeks critical funding to repair a seawall that has been damaged by hurricanes and storm events.

The Historic Preservation Board was created in 2003 as part of Martin County's Historic Preservation Ordinance. This mission of the Historic Preservation Board is to advance the local designation of the County's historic structures and landmarks and to raise awareness of the importance of the County's architectural and archaeological legacy to community identity and the preservation of Martin County's unique past. Our duties include designating structures more than 50 years old to the Martin County Local Register of Historic Landmarks. The Tuckahoe

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Mansion was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 and was designated to the local historic register by our Board in 2015.

We appreciate the opportunity to support Martin County and stand ready to help make the community a better place with the replacement of the seawall at Tuckahoe Mansion. Please support funding of the Division of Historical Resources special category grant program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Niki Norton, Chair
Martin County Historic Preservation Board

NN:rz