

March on Politics: Lawmakers Want County Declared Disaster Area

The Tribune's blog, March on Politics, just put up this post on Gus's request that Hillsborough County crop producers who suffered from the deep freeze in early January be made eligible for disaster assistance.

Tampa Bay area U.S. Reps Gus Bilirakis and Adam Putnam have joined in a letter to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer urging him to declare Hillsborough County a disaster area, following a wave of freezing temperatures in early January that damaged strawberry crops and tropical fish farms.

Such a declaration would make the affected agriculture producers eligible to apply for existing or future federal disaster assistance. [Read full post...](#)

In a release on Friday, Gus recounted his visit to Parkesdale Farms immediately following the freeze and urged federal action.

"In January, I viewed the extent of the crop damage caused by the freezing temperatures. It was significant...The Federal government must now act to ensure that those producers whose livelihoods were affected by the freezing temperatures are eligible for any federal assistance available now or in the future."

At the time, we posted news coverage of the freeze and Gus's visit to Parkesdale Farms.

You may view the letter sent to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer [here](#)