

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) today joined the entire Florida delegation in Washington in sending a letter to President Obama urging the Administration to investigate the threat of oil below the surface in the Gulf of Mexico and act swiftly to develop a plan to reduce the threat.

“We write to urge your Administration’s immediate action to authorize and initiate investigative efforts that will better quantify the amount, distribution, and nature of oil that is moving below the surface in the Gulf of Mexico,” members of the delegation wrote. “As you know, there is a significant surface oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico, but we believe that the larger threat may be from oil suspended in the water column below the ocean’s surface, especially to the fragile ecosystems along the Florida coastlines. Much of our tourism economy depends on swift action to identify and ameliorate this threat.

“It is clear that oil is moving into these strong loop currents and could bring oil to our coastlines within a few days. What is much less clear is how much subsurface oil is heading towards our shores. This is critical information to allow local responders prepare for the unfolding crisis. Surface oil floats. You can see, it, track it, and plan for appropriate mitigation with booms and dispersants. Unfortunately, it is much harder to observe subsurface oil. We do not know the dimensions, nature or movement of the threat.

“As you know, many millions of Floridians and other Gulf Coast residents depend on these resources for their livelihoods. Florida has the most densely populated coastline in the United States, and this spill threatens the beaches on which people live, on which our hospitality and tourism industry depends, and on which our commercial and recreational boating, fishing and diving industries depend.

“Again, we urge you to work to immediately implement the best ideas and proposals to collect the data we need to properly understand the threat posed by the subsurface oil spill. We look forward to working with you in any way we can to achieve this goal.”

To read the full letter, click [here](#):