

The Delray Democrat

DeSantis Wants to Turn Florida State Parks into Golf Courses^{1,2}

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Apparently, Florida does not have enough golf courses and hotels. Thankfully, Ron DeSantis has found room for more on nine of Florida's state parks!

Indeed, last week it was leaked that the Florida Department of Environmental "Protection" is planning to allow golf courses and hotels to be built on Florida state parks. These beautiful parks are home to several endangered species and contain some of the most unique wild areas in the world. For the state that has by far the most golf courses of any in the country, this defies belief. The good news? People are not having it. Online and in-person, Floridians from all political backgrounds came together in the tens of thousands to protest. The Republican lawmakers-fearing the consequences this would have in November- pleaded ignorance. It seemed everyone who would be involved with this plan had no idea about it and desperately wanted to find out who was behind it!

Things got especially heated for me. I live right next to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, and I'm also running for Congress against Brian Mast. I knew my district would not stand for this, so I got to work mobilizing my supporters. I used my platform to call out Brian Mast for pretending to have no idea about this plan and taking a neutral stance on it when he received over a million dollars from developers, including the Nicklaus family, who were purportedly behind this plan. Mast finally responded by writing a letter denouncing the project. DeSantis has also backed off, and it looks like the plan will no longer go through. However, I was not fooled. This project has been in the works since 2011, and Republican lawmakers will reintroduce it every few years until it passes. Meanwhile, politicians like Mast will take huge amounts of money from the developers behind these plans, then play dumb when the plans resurface. I decided it was time for some public accountability.

My team organized a huge protest/press conference right outside Mast's office. Hundreds of people attended, and my friend Debbie Mucarsel-Powell even drove up from Miami to speak to the crowd and support our cause (If you're not aware, Debbie is going to take Rick Scott's senate seat this November!). Politicians like Rick Scott and Brian Mast need to know that they're being watched. We see who's funding them, we see how their votes in Congress contradict their deceptive rhetoric, and we will make sure that the public knows the truth. But right before my event, Brian Mast scheduled his own press conference at the same location, one hour before mine.

This was a plot to avoid accountability and steal attention from my event. I decided I had to show up, but none of my supporters were there yet. It was me and a few of my staff amid Mast

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), September 2024, page 4.

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and a throng of his supporters. They tried to bully and intimidate me, but I didn't let them. Again and again I asked Mast about the dirty money he takes and his anti-environment voting record, and every time he would obfuscate and accuse me of 'politicizing'. I didn't get a straight answer from him, but he now knows that I won't stand down. The best part? An hour later, Mast suddenly disappeared when all my supporters showed up. Our event attracted far more people than Mast's did, and we showed our community the truth behind this evil project.

My message is to all Democrats: MAGA Republicans will use bully tactics to scare you, and you must not let them. We must stand up face-to-face and make them answer for their votes and their donors. If they don't answer, let their silence speak for them. If we do this, they will often slink away like Mast did when my supporters arrived. At 25 years old, I'm the youngest Congressional nominee in the country, so if I can do this, you can too!

Unlike Mast, I'll never have to answer for dirty money because I rely on individual donations from folks like you. If you believe in my cause, any support would be greatly appreciated. You can click [here](#) or scan the QR code to donate.

