

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

EMPLOYEE POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM Original Amendment

This form is for disclosing the receipt of travel expenses from private sources for travel taken in connection with official duties. This form does not eliminate the need to report privately-funded travel on the annual *Financial Disclosure Statements* of those employees required to file them. In accordance with House Rule 25, clause 5, **you must complete this form and file it with the Clerk of the House by email at gifttravelreports@mail.house.gov, within 15 days after travel is completed.** Please **do not** file this form with the Committee on Ethics.

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

1. Name of Traveler: Andrea Valdes Valderrama
2. a. Name of Accompanying Relative: _____ **OR** None
b. Relationship to Traveler: Spouse Child Other (specify): _____
3. a. Dates: Departure: _____ Return: _____
b. Dates at Personal Expense, if any: _____ **OR** None
4. Departure City: Orlando, FL Destination: Clewiston, FL, Belle Glade, FL, West Palm Beach, FL Return City: Washington DC
5. Sponsor(s), Who Paid for the Trip: South Florida Agricultural Foundation
6. Describe Meetings and Events Attended: Toured a sugar, lettuce, celery, and various other farms. Met with farmers, ranchers, and growers to learn more about the industry and challenges faced, including trade, visas, and orange greening.
7. Attached to this form are **each** of the following, *signify that each item is attached by checking the corresponding box:*
 - a. a completed *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form*;
 - b. the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* completed by the trip sponsor **prior** to the trip, **including all** attachments **and** the *Additional Sponsor Form(s)*;
 - c. page 2 of the completed *Traveler Form* submitted by the employee; **and**
 - d. the letter from the Committee on Ethics approving my participation on this trip.
8. a. I represent that I participated in each of the activities reflected in the attached sponsor's agenda. *Signify statement is true by checking the box.*
b. If not, explain: _____

I certify that the information contained on this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Traveler:  Date: May 12, 2025

I authorized this travel in advance. I have determined that all of the expenses listed on the attached *Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form* were necessary and that the travel was in connection with the employee's official duties and would not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Name of Supervising Member: Parren Soto Date: May 12, 2025

Signature of Supervising Member: 

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

SPONSOR POST-TRAVEL DISCLOSURE FORM

Original Amendment

This form must be completed by an officer of any organization that served as the primary trip sponsor in providing travel expenses or reimbursement for travel expenses to House Members, officers, or employees under House Rule 25, clause 5. **A completed copy of the form must be provided to each House Member, officer, or employee who participated in the trip within 10 days of their return.** You must answer all questions, and check all boxes, on this form for your submission to comply with House Rules and the Committee's Travel Regulations. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the denial of future requests to sponsor trips and/or subject the current traveler to disciplinary action or a requirement to repay the trip expenses.

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

1. Sponsor(s) who paid or provided in-kind support for the trip: South Florida Agricultural Foundation

2. Travel Destination(s): Clewiston, FL; Belle Glade, FL; West Palm Beach, FL

3. Date of Departure: April 22, 2025 Date of Return: April 25, 2025

4. Name(s) of Traveler(s): Andrea Valdes

Note: You may list more than one traveler on a form only if **all** information is **identical** for each person listed.

5. **Actual amount** of expenses paid on behalf of, or reimbursed to, each individual named in Question 4:

	Total Transportation Expenses	Total Lodging Expenses	Total Meal Expenses	Total Other Expenses (dollar amount per item and description)
Traveler	\$390- roundtrip airfare, bus and airboat	\$732 - 3 nights of hotels	\$133.12	\$110.94 train reimbursement and to/from airport
Accompanying Family Member				

6. All expenses connected to the trip were for actual costs incurred and not a *per diem* or lump sum payment. *Signify statement is true by checking box.*

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:  Date: 5/5/25

Name: Ardis Hammock Title: President

Organization: South Florida Agricultural Foundation

I am an officer of the above-named organization. Signify statement is true by checking box.

Address: P.O. Box 942 Loxahatchee, FL 33470

Telephone: 202-431-9763 Email: ardis@soflagfoundation.org

Committee staff may contact the above-named individual if additional information is required.

If you have questions regarding your completion of this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103.

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

TRAVELER FORM

1. Name of Traveler: Andrea Valdes Valderrama
2. Sponsor(s) who will be paying or providing in-kind support for the trip: South Florida Agricultural Foundation
3. City and State **OR** Foreign Country of Travel: West Palm Beach, Clewiston, Belle Glade, FL
4. a. Date of Departure: 04/22/25 Date of Return: 04/25/25
b. Yes No Will you be extending the trip at your personal expense?
If yes, list dates at personal expense: _____
5. a. Yes No Will you be accompanied by a family member at the sponsor's expense? **If yes:**
(1) Name of Accompanying Family Member: _____
(2) Relationship to Traveler: Spouse Child Other (specify): _____
(3) Yes No Accompanying Family Member is at least 18 years of age?
6. a. Yes No Did the trip sponsor answer "Yes" to Question 8(c) on the *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* (i.e., travel is sponsored by an entity that employs a registered federal lobbyist or a foreign agent)?
b. **If yes, and you are requesting lodging for two nights, explain why the second night is warranted:**

7. Yes No *Primary Trip Sponsor Form* is attached, including agenda, invitation, invitee list, and any other attachments and Additional Sponsor Forms.

NOTE: The agenda should show the traveler's individual schedule, including departure and arrival times and identify the specific events in which the traveler will be participating.

8. Explain why participation in the trip is connected to the traveler's individual official or representational duties. **Staff should include their job title and how the activities on the itinerary relate to their duties.**
As Legislative Director for Congressman Darren Soto of Florida, I oversee a variety of issues that affect our constituents. Agriculture is a big part of the economy of our state and the tour will help me better understand what helps shape farmers, ranchers, and growers' needs.

9. Yes No **Is the traveler aware of any registered federal lobbyists or foreign agents involved in planning, organizing, requesting, or arranging the trip?**

10. For staff travelers, to be completed by your employing Member:

ADVANCED AUTHORIZATION OF EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

I hereby authorize the individual named above, an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives who works under my direct supervision, to accept expenses for the trip described in this request. I have determined that the above-described travel is in connection with my employee's official duties and that acceptance of these expenses will not create the appearance that the employee is using public office for private gain.

Signature of Employing Member: _____



Date: March 24, 2025

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

TRAVELER FORM

This form should be completed by House Members, officers, or employees seeking Committee approval of privately-sponsored travel or reimbursement for travel under House Rule 25, clause 5. The completed form should be submitted directly to the Committee by each invited House Member, officer, or employee, together with the completed and signed trip sponsor form(s) and any attachments. A copy of this form, minus this initial page, will be made available for public inspection.

This form and any attachments may be submitted at 1015 Longworth House Office Building or travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

Your completed request must be submitted to the Committee no less than 30 days before your proposed departure date. Absent exceptional circumstances, permission will not be granted for requests received less than 30 days before the trip commences. **You must receive explicit approval from the Committee before you depart on this trip.**

Name of Traveler: Andrea Valdes Valderrama

NOTE: Willful or knowing misrepresentations on this form may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

I certify that the information contained on both pages of this form is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: 

Name of Signatory (if other than traveler): _____

For Staff (name of employing Member or Committee): Rep Darren Soto

Office Address: 2353 RHOB

Telephone Number: 202-225-9889

Email Address of Contact Person: andrea.valdes@mail.house.gov

Check this box if the sponsoring entity is a media outlet, the purpose of the trip is to make a media appearance sponsored by that entity, and these forms are being submitted to the Committee less than 30 days before the trip departure date.

NOTE: You must complete all of the contact information fields above, as Committee staff may need to contact you if additional information is required.

KEEP A COPY OF THIS FORM. Page 2 (but not this page) must be submitted to the Clerk as part of the post-travel disclosure required by House Rule 25. Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting paperwork for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

If there are any questions regarding this form, please contact the Committee on Ethics at 202-225-7103 or via email: travel.requests@mail.house.gov.

South Florida Agricultural Foundation
Staff Invite List
April 22-25, 2025

Adams	Joshua
Aghakhan	Brooke
Anthony	Rey
Araboghli	Sami
Archev	Bailey
Arguello	Hector
Ball	Bill
Barcley	Kate
Bardot	Ryan
Beckelman	Yuri
Beninga	Ashlynn
Bennett	Derron
Berardo	Jason
Borchardt	Skylar
Brooks	Rodney
Chan	Evan
Chatham	Laurel Lee
Cisneros	Alex
Clark-Murrieta	Daniela
Clarke	Patricia
Costa	Janie
Courtney	Will
Delaney	Josh
Derks	Madelyn
Deusenberry	Megan
Dever	Tyler
Donnelly	Ryan
Dwyer	William
Easter	Benjamin
Elagamy	Laila
Farrell	Stefanie
Fernandez	Hayley
Fisher	Halee
Foltz	Jonathan
Ganter	Jack
Gattman	Jacob

Graff	Justina
Graham	Austin
Han	Jihan
Harberts	Eli
Herrera	Patrick
Hoekstra	Trenton
Hoffman	Landon
Hofmann	Ryan
Humphrey	Patrick
Ischiropolous	Dean
Johnston	Emma
Karlins	Cydney
Kirkland	Hunter
Kocerha	Stephen
Kolb	John Mark
Koncar	Steve
Kuebler	Sam
Lanclos	Kent
LeBlanc	Johanna
Lobert	Josh
Love	Mikhail
Mae	Mason
Martin	Michael
McHan	Abby
Mott	Joseph
Nolan	Blake
Parish	Braden
Pitts	Lacy
Podliska	Rick
Powell	Reed
Powell	Jared
Rigali	Thomas
Rizk	Benjamin
Roberts	Zach
Rogers	Sam
Rossmann	Julia
Seifert	Peter
Shinholster	Michael
Simmons	Colton
Simmons	Brown

So	Hannah
Thomas	Katherine
Thompson	Cross
Tonsager	Josh
Valdes	Andrea
Valenti	Beatrice
Von Stein	Jesse
Wagener	Rob
White	Saisha
White	Trevor
Whitmore	John
Wickenhauser	Calla
Williamson	Tucker
Young	Julianne
Zhen	Chris

Reason for invite: Most are referrals from previous tour (staff) attendees or listed as working on ag policy or related communications issues.

South Florida Agricultural Foundation (SFAF)
ITINERARY
2025 Congressional Staff Tour
April 22 – 25, 2025

***Note: All food/catering/transportation/lodging is paid for
by the South Florida Agricultural Foundation**

Tuesday, April 22, 2025

7:59 – 10:33 AM	Depart Washington-Reagan National Airport on American Airlines Flight # 2349
10:33 – 11:15 AM	Arrive Palm Beach International Airport. SFAF group leaders will meet guests at the West Palm Beach airport, locate luggage, board bus. Guests will be transported by bus for the rest of the trip.
11:55—12:45 PM	Travel to Belle Glade. As bus drives through the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA), a presentation of points of interest along the way include the Sem-Chi Rice Plant, Florida Crystals sugarcane fields, the Sugarcane Growers Cooperative Mill and lettuce, sweet corn and sugarcane fields at various stages of growth. Also, a video presentation about water issues pertaining to the lake and how sugarcane is grown and harvested will be shown during the ride. Boxed lunches will be provided and eaten en route.
12:45 – 2:15 PM	Tour of DUDA Farms led by Sam Jones, General Manager, showcasing the farming operations where leafy greens, lettuce and other produce is grown. The group will go out into the field and observe the harvesting of lettuce while discussing food safety and workforce issues.
2:15 – 2:30 PM	Travel to TKM, also in Belle Glade.
2:30 – 3:15 PM	Tour of TKM Bengard Farm led by Ethan Basore, Farm Manager, showcasing the farming operations where leafy greens, lettuce and other produce is grown. The group will go out into the field and observe the harvesting of lettuce while discussing food safety and workforce issues.
3:15 – 3:30 PM	Board bus.
3:30 – 4:00 PM	Depart TKM to travel to Hampton Inn in Clewiston.
4:00 – 5:45 PM	Check into the Hampton Inn, prepare for dinner presentation.
5:45 – 6:00 PM	Depart hotel, drive to Hilliard Brothers
6:00—6:45 PM	Tour Hillard Brothers to learn about the Cattle industry in Florida and the challenges they face presented by Lindsey Wiggins and Tripp Whidden. Then head to Swindle Farm for dinner.
6:45 – 9:00 PM	Working dinner at Swindle Farm. This is an actual working sugarcane farm owned by an independent grower. Meet local city and county elected officials during working reception and dinner. The mayor of Clewiston, James Pittman, will speak on how important agriculture is to the financial prosperity of the city. The county and city commissioners present: Ramon Iglesias, Mali Gardner, Hillary Hyslope and Jason Williams, will discuss the effects of Covid on the agricultural community and other issues rural areas are facing. Short presentation of dairy farming in the area by Sutton Rucks of Milking R Dairy and how the recent laws have affected their business. Approximately one and a half hours will be spent on the listed activities and presentations.
9:00 PM	Return to the Hampton Inn.

Wednesday, April 23, 2025

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast in the lobby and board bus.
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Depart the Hampton Inn to travel to sugarcane fields.
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Tour Sugarcane Field operations and harvesting, Scott Berden, Precision Ag Manager with U. S. Sugar, will discuss compliance of worker protection standards, burning regulations, pesticide and herbicide issues and other Federal regulations that have an impact on the cost and procedures of farming sugarcane. Jarad Plair, Asst. Director of Farm Operations, will explain how drones are used in the agricultural fields. A stop will be made at a pump station where Richard Sanchez, Director of Farm Operations and Land Mgt, will present and discuss water quality standards.
12:00 – 12:45 PM	Lunch at Clewiston Youth Center provided by SFAF. Ardis Hammock, with Frierson Farms, will give a presentation on the American Farm Policy & Trade, discussing the farm bill, NAFTA and other trade issues.
12:45 – 1:00 PM	Travel to U. S. Sugar Mill and Refinery, Clewiston.
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Arrive at U. S. Sugar Corp. Mill and Refinery for tour of sugarcane processing procedures led by Brannan Thomas, Dir. of Community Relations. Discussion will include compliance with OSHA and federal air quality standards, while the refinery will focus on FDA food safety and labeling issues. Tour of packaging facilities.
3:00 – 3:15 PM	Depart mill, travel to the Hampton Inn.
3:15 – 4:30 PM	Arrive at hotel, prepare for citrus tour and dinner presentation.
4:30 – 4:45 PM	Depart hotel, drive to Southern Gardens Citrus in Clewiston.
4:45 – 5:45 PM	Southern Gardens Citrus grove stop, Jim Snively, Vice President of Citrus Groves, will discuss citrus greening, hurricanes and other issues destructive to citrus crops, and how they work with the USDA's APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) to develop new citrus varieties and combat citrus diseases.
5:45 – 6:00 PM	Travel to Dunwody Lodge
6:00 – 6:30 PM	Arrive at Dunwody Lodge in Clewiston for welcome reception and opportunity to speak one-on-one with local farmers who grow sugarcane, corn, green beans, kale and broccoli.
6:30 – 9:00 PM	Working dinner where SFAF Board President Ardis Hammock will introduce the independent farmers present (Nicky Perez, Donnie Lundy, Carl Perry, Luigi Trotta, Justin Sobie, and Alan Hammock) and each will speak 5-10 minutes on the history of their farm and the produce they grow, showcasing the diversity of crops produced in the area. Staffers will be formally introduced to all the farmers. SFAF will purchase steaks cooked by Hendry County Cattlemen's Association who will discuss the importance of the cattle industry in Florida. Approximately two hours will be spent on the listed activities and presentations.
9:00 PM	Return to the Hampton Inn.

Thursday, April 24, 2025

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast in the lobby and board bus.
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Depart the Hampton Inn to travel to Belle Glade to Slim’s Fish Camp.
9:00 – 11: 30 AM	Depart from dock on airboat for tour of Lake Okeechobee; Boats will stop out on the lake where Terrie Bates, a water resource specialist that assists the agriculture industry in the Lake Okeechobee and Everglades watershed in matters related to Flood Protection, Water Supply and Stormwater Management, will explain the relationship between the lake and agriculture, discuss water quality and quantity issues and how EAA farmers must comply with federal water regulations. She will address questions from staffers. Airboats will return back to the dock.
11:30 – 12:00 PM	Drive to the EREC in Belle Glade.
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Arrive at EREC. Working lunch provided by SFAF purchased from local farms. Introduction of panel of farmer members of Florida Farm Bureau moderated by Alleigh Reitz from Everglades Farm Equipment and a Western Palm Beach County Farm Bureau board member, and Sam Phares, District 8 Director, Florida Farm Bureau Federation. Each farm member on the panel will explain an item of importance in their farming process. Farm members participating are Matt Hoffman (Sugar Cane Growers Co-Op, Chuck Obern (C&B Farms), Keith Wedgworth (Wedgworth), Brad Phares (Lazy JP Ranch), Jamie Fussell (FFVA), Buddy McKinstry (JEM Farms), Mike Schlechter (Everglades Farm Equipment) and Olivia Pope (Pope Farms).
1:00 – 2:45 PM	One-on-one roundtable discussion with the farmers representing sweet corn, green beans, peppers, tomatoes and other vegetables, nursery operations and agricultural research. Discussion will include issues with federal pest management regulations, H2A worker programs, wage and labor compliance, NAFTA and how farming is impacted by state and federal issues.
2:45 – 3:00 PM	Board bus to depart.
3:00 – 3:45 PM	Travel to Bedner’s Farm Fresh Market, downtown West Palm Beach.
3:45 – 4:15 PM	Marie Bedner will lead the tour of Bedner’s Farm Fresh Market, one of the few remaining family owned and operated farmer's markets in South Florida, bringing fresh produce from the farm, grown right outside their back door. Also, watch a brief presentation of the new facility the Bedner’s provide for their H2A workers.
4:15 – 5:00 PM	Board bus and travel to, Canopy by Hilton Hotel.
5:00 – 6:45 PM	Time at hotel to prepare for dinner and evening program.
6:45 PM	Meet in hotel lobby, board bus.
6:45 – 7:00 PM	Depart for dinner.
7:00 – 9:45 PM	Working dinner at Grandview Public Market where we will have a post tour debrief, issues analysis and take time to answer any questions the staffers may have. We will also have owner/operators from local south Florida plant nurseries join us in our discussions.
9:45 PM	Board bus to return to Canopy by Hilton Hotel.

Friday, April 25, 2025

8:00 – 9:30 AM	Working breakfast at Loic Bakery Cafe. Ardis Hammock leads an overview discussion of ag operations tours from the previous days and how they are all interconnected as the South Florida agricultural industry. Contact information for all speakers distributed.
9:30 – 9:45 AM	Board bus, load luggage and depart for airport.
9:45 – 10:00 AM	Travel to Palm Beach International Airport.
11:30 AM	Depart Palm Beach International Airport Depart for Washington-Reagan National Airport on American Airlines nonstop Flight #2349
1:59 PM	Arrive Washington, DC.

Michael Guest, Mississippi
Chairman
Mark DeSaulnier, California
Ranking Member

John H. Rutherford, Florida
Andrew R. Garbarino, New York
Ashley Hinson, Iowa
Nathaniel Moran, Texas

Deborah K. Ross, North Carolina
Glenn F. Ivey, Maryland
Sylvia R. Garcia, Texas
Suhas Subramanyam, Virginia



ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

Thomas A. Rust
Staff Director and Chief Counsel

Keelie Broom
Counsel to the Chairman

David Arrojo
Counsel to the Ranking Member

1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6328
Telephone: (202) 225-7103
<https://Ethics.House.gov>

April 8, 2025

Ms. Andrea Valdes Valderrama
Office of the Honorable Darren Soto
2353 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Valdes Valderrama:

Pursuant to House Rule 25, clause 5(d)(2), the Committee on Ethics hereby approves your proposed trip to Clewiston and West Palm Beach, Florida, scheduled for April 22 to 25, 2025, sponsored by South Florida Agricultural Foundation, Inc.

You must complete an Employee Post-Travel Disclosure Form (which your employing Member must also sign) and file it, together with a Sponsor Post-Travel Disclosure Form completed by the trip sponsor, with the Clerk of the House within 15 days after your return from travel. As part of that filing, you are also required to attach a copy of this letter and both the Traveler and Primary Trip Sponsor Forms (including attachments) you previously submitted to the Committee in seeking pre-approval for this trip. If you are required to file an annual Financial Disclosure Statement, you must also report all travel expenses totaling more than \$480 from a single source on the "Travel" schedule of your annual Financial Disclosure Statement covering this calendar year. Finally, Travel Regulation § 404(d) also requires you to keep a copy of all request forms and supporting information provided to the Committee for three subsequent Congresses from the date of travel.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Committee's Office of Advice and Education at extension 5-7103.

Sincerely,

Michael Guest
Chairman

Mark DeSaulnier
Ranking Member

MG/MD:tn