



May 10, 2023

Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Request for Line-Item Veto of Urban Fertilizer Ordinance Preemption

Dear Governor DeSantis:

1000 Friends of Florida respectfully requests you to veto the proviso following line item 146 in SB 2500 reading in part "... \$250,000 in nonrecurring funds shall be used by the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) to evaluate the effectiveness of the timing of seasonal fertilizer restrictions on urban landscapes towards achieving nutrient target objectives for waterbodies statewide."

Unfortunately, this appropriation for the UF/IFAS programs aiding local governments includes a discrete appropriation that prohibits a local government from adopting or amending a fertilizer management ordinance pursuant to s. 403.9337, F.S., which provides for a prohibited application period not in existence on June 30, 2023. This preemption will tie the hands of local governments from protecting their own waterfront economies by prohibiting new effective urban fertilizer ordinances.

From the beginning of your governorship, your administration has identified tackling water quality pollution as a priority, and appropriated record levels of funding to state agencies to clean up the many of sources of pollution plaguing our waterways. Urban stormwater runoff carrying fertilizer into our rivers, springs, lakes, and estuaries fuels harmful algal blooms, and harms our communities and the local hospitality, fishing, boating, and eco-tourism economies. Weakening the ability of our local governments to regulate urban fertilizer application, for any amount of time, works against your priority and wastes taxpaying Floridians' dollars being spent on water quality restoration.

The Florida Supreme Court has held that the Governor can limit an appropriations veto to specific line items of the Budget (SB 2500).¹ Your veto will save the popular, non-partisan urban pollution control measures that have been adopted across the state over the last 16 years.

Please veto the proviso following line item 146 in the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Owens".

Paul Owens
President

¹ Brown v. Firestone, 382 So.2d 654 (1980)

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