

June 15, 2005

Ms. Glenda E. Hood
Secretary of State
Florida Department of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Secretary Hood:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of Florida, under the provisions of Article III, Section 8, of the Constitution of Florida, I do hereby withhold my approval of and transmit to you, with my objections, Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 658 enacted during the 37th Session of the Legislature of Florida convened under the Constitution of 1968, during the Regular Session of 2005, and entitled:

An act relating to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg . . .

The bill authorizes the Campus Board of the St. Petersburg branch campus of the University of South Florida to submit a proposal to the University of South Florida Board of Trustees to establish a fee to finance the planning, construction, and operation of a student center facility.

While this bill appears well intended, I am reluctant to approve it for several reasons. First, the bill authorizes a particular branch campus of a state university to assess a special fee to pay for a specific facility. No other state university is authorized to assess this type of fee. The bill does not appear to be part of a cohesive state policy regarding university tuition and fees.

Second, the bill exempts the new fee from the current statutory limit of five percent on annual fee increases. Therefore, student fees at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg may increase by as much as \$16.30 per credit hour, costing full-time students an additional \$489 each year. Furthermore, the bill does not include a sunset provision, so this fee may be assessed in perpetuity.

Finally, the branch campus is able to use other available revenue options to finance the construction of a new student center facility. The campus has chosen not to exercise these other options.

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For the reasons provided above, I am withholding my approval of Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 658, and do hereby veto the same.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bush