



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

May 1, 2013

President Don Gaetz
The Florida Senate
The Capitol, Suite 409
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear President Gaetz:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Florida, under the provisions of Article III, Section 8, of the Constitution of Florida, I do hereby veto and transmit my objections to Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 718, enacted during the 115th Session of the Legislature of Florida during the Regular Session of 2013 and entitled:

An act relating to family law . . .

Senator Stargel and Representative Workman are to be commended for their efforts in proposing changes to Florida alimony law. I appreciate Representative Workman reaching out to me to express his support of SB 718 and how he believes it will benefit Florida families. SB 718 seeks to modernize Florida's alimony system by leveling the playing field in divorce proceedings, and there are several forward looking elements of this bill. Alimony has long been a key component of our domestic relations law. It represents an important remedy for our judiciary to use in providing support to families as they adjust to changes in life circumstances.

Because the subject matter of this bill involves family relationships, numerous Floridians have forcefully expressed their views on the topic. Many Florida families have been impacted by the difficulties of marital issues, both concerning children and starting over. As a husband, father and grandfather, I understand the vital importance of family. In weighing the issues associated with this bill, however, I have concluded that I cannot support this legislation because it applies retroactively and thus tampers with the settled economic expectations of many Floridians who have experienced divorce.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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The retroactive adjustment of alimony could result in unfair, unanticipated results. Current Florida law already provides for the adjustment of alimony under the proper circumstances. The law also ensures that spouses who have sacrificed their careers to raise a family do not suffer financial catastrophe upon divorce, and that the lower earning spouse and stay-at-home parent will not be financially punished. Floridians have relied on this system post-divorce and planned their lives accordingly.

For the reasons stated above, I withhold my approval of Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 718, and do hereby veto same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and "S".

Rick Scott
Governor

cc: Speaker Will Weatherford
Secretary Ken Detzner