



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

April 6, 2018

Secretary Kenneth W. Detzner
Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Secretary Detzner:

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 House Bill 1149, enacted during the 120th Session of the Legislature of Florida, during the Regular Session of 2018 and entitled:

An act relating to Environmental Regulation

Protecting Florida's environment has been a top priority during my time as Governor. We have made a tremendous amount of progress in protecting and restoring Florida's natural habitats. This includes one of the most robust state environmental budgets Florida has ever seen. This year, we have invested more than \$4 billion to protect our environment, building on our historic commitments to Florida's natural treasures.

HB 1149 could create confusion in our water quality and aquifer protection regulatory structure. While I support the Legislature's action in the Blue Star Program and the proper implementation of the C-51 Reservoir, I do not believe that approving HB 1149 is worth risking Floridians' confidence in our existing water quality regulatory system. After thoroughly reviewing HB 1149, I am not convinced that this legislation will not muddle Florida's protection of our aquifers. The Department of Environmental Protection will remain focused on protecting Florida's water resources and will continue to safeguard our aquifers under existing laws. Florida has stringent water quality standards, and we are going to keep it that way.

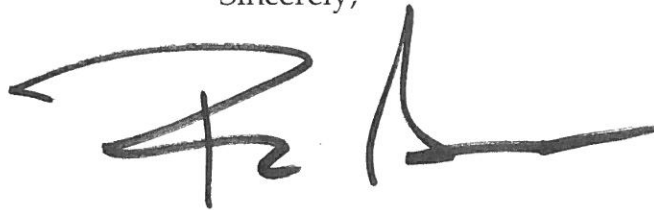
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While there are many worthwhile provisions in this bill, they do not outweigh my concerns that this legislation presents toward protecting Florida's aquifer. During next year's legislative session, I urge the Florida Legislature to revisit the implementation of the C-51 Reservoir. Although this project is still in progress and not yet in use, local communities should have the ability to use the completed reservoir to bolster their water supply, as was the original intent of the project. Also, next year, the Legislature should enact provisions like the Blue Star Program outlined in HB 1149. Although these specific protections for our environment already exist, the Blue Star Program provides additional guidelines for utilities to protect Florida's water resources. Worthwhile programs like these build on the progress we have made in notifying the public of pollution incidents. I am confident that DEP will work with stakeholders and the Legislature to address the issues raised in this bill and find solutions while still maintaining our strong protection of Florida's aquifers.

For the reasons stated above, I hereby veto Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill 1149.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rick Scott', written in a cursive style.

Rick Scott
Governor