



The mission of the Florida Native Plant Society is to promote the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the native plants and native plant communities of Florida.

May 16, 2009

Governor Charlie Crist
The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Subject: Recommendation to Veto Senate Bill 2080

Dear Governor Crist:

It is with tremendous disappointment that the Florida Native Plant Society must recommend that you veto Senate Bill 2080. We were extremely excited by the provisions of the bill that would have advanced the use of Florida Friendly Landscaping; however, the addition of last-minute amendments have corrupted the bill and now we ask that you use your veto power to make a strong statement about the legislature's propensity for last-minute attempts to put bad policy into law by hiding it among the good.

We appreciate the support this bill exhibits for implementation of a more sustainable approach to landscaping. Huge quantities of water could potentially be conserved, to the benefit of the natural systems that are as dependent on water for their health and survival as are our human communities. Conservation is the least expensive and most environmentally friendly new source of water, and changing the way we landscape is simply the best way to conserve.

The water management district's governing boards provide a mechanism that helps minimize the influence of politics on important decisions related to the protection and proper management of Florida's water resources. Their authority to approve or deny the issuance of water use and wetland permits, exercised in the context of a public meeting, is an important element of representative democracy and "government in the sunshine". Although they are not elected, they are appointed by you to represent the entire breadth of the public interest. They play a critical role that should not have to be compromised in order to implement a more sustainable approach to landscaping and water conservation.

We hope the Florida Friendly provisions of this bill will be revived next year and put into law. The provisions that are unfriendly to Florida's future are sufficient to merit a veto. Thank you for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Eugene M. Kelly, President
Florida Native Plant Society

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