



Legislative Update - Week 3

2020 Legislative Update – Week 3

Several bills similar to Sen. Mayfield’s water quality bill, **SB 712**, were heard this week. Preemption legislation advanced this week as well.



Water Quality: SB 1450 – Environmental Enforcement by Gruters passed the first of its Senate Committee stops on Tuesday. This bill increases the penalties for violating Florida’s environmental laws. Fines have not been adjusted since 2001. Fines would be calculated daily until the environmental harm is fixed or plans to remediate the issue are approved by the Dept. of Env. Protection. The goal is to deter environmental violations from occurring rather than paying fines as a cost of doing business. This bill is consistent with the Governor’s commitment to provide funding and enforcement to address water quality. The bill is assigned next to the Sen. Appropriations Sub Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice. The identical House version, **HB 1091** by Fine has not yet been scheduled in any of its assigned committees.

SB 1382 – Environmental Resource Management by Albritton also passed the first committee of reference this week. This bill provides additional management strategies for basin management action plans and best management practices (BMPs) for agricultural run-off and non-point source pollution. The goal of the bill is to have 100% enrollment in BMP’s from agriculture lands within in 5 years. This bill extends the time between collection and transmission of data and inspections to every two years. One controversial element of this bill is the preemption of local governments to award legal rights to animals or nature. A “Rights of Nature” movement is growing in several FL counties to advance laws and policies for the protection of nature and the environment. This component of the bill drew emphatic debate from both spectrums of the issue but in the end the bill passed 4-0. The bill will be heard next in the Sen. Appropriations Subcommittee on Ag., Env. & Gen. Gov’t.

HB 1343 - Water Quality Improvements by Payne, and **HB 1363** - Environmental Resource Management by Overdorf were passed out of the House Ag. and Natural Resource Subcommittee on Tuesday. Collectively these bills transfer regulation of onsite sewage from the Dept. of Health to the Dept. of Env. Regulation, establish data reporting and inspections for best management practices and grant funding for waste water improvements. **HB 1343** will be heard next in House Appropriations and **HB 1363** is headed to

Water Quality and Preemption: SCCF has been tracking the sunscreen preemption bills that restrict local governments from enacting environmental protections by banning sun screens that contain 2 chemicals that studies indicate are harmful to coral reefs. The Senate version of this preemption bill, **SB 172** by Bradley has been heard by all of its committees of reference and passed the full Senate by a vote of 25-14. The House version, **HB 113** by Roach, was heard in its last committee of reference on Thursday and passed by a vote of 10-6. Similar preemptions were vetoed last year by Governor DeSantis.

Two important issues that have yet to be heard in their respective House committees are the fracking ban bill and the Florida Forever \$100 million land acquisition bill. The identical Senate versions of these bill have cleared the first of 3 committee assignments. These bills are SCCF priorities and long overdue so look for an SCCF Action Alert requesting movement on these important issues.

SCCF Legislative Tracker

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