

Audubon Florida/League of Women Voters/Sierra Club/ 1000 Friends of Florida/Defenders of Wildlife

PRESS RELEASE

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Legislators Urged to Drop Environmental Permitting Bills *Conservation community calls for Patronis to end assault on Florida's environmental laws*

Tallahassee, FL (March 24, 2014) – Environmental groups today asked legislators to drop bills that weaken local environmental protection. HB 703 and SB 1464 have nearly identical provisions that will prevent enforcement of water protection rules. The bills also undermine the rules on how local officials vote on new developments.

It's time to end the steady assault on Florida's environmental laws. Each year Representative Jimmy Patronis organizes a collection of changes to the laws that are little more than favors to special interests, but very harmful to the laws that Florida's citizens depend on to protect our environment.

"This bill would provide cover for an almost permanent right to hijack citizen input on water issues, putting the control of water fully in the hands of special interests. Legislators must make sure this bill goes no further, and work harder to protect our state's most valuable natural resource." – Deirdre Macnab, President, League of Women Voters

"The proposed amendments undermine the good springs legislation approved by the Senate Environmental Preservation Committee last week. How can local governments help protect our water if they aren't able to update their ordinances?" – Charles Pattison, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Florida

"Counties are being targeted for protecting their wetlands. By preempting those ordinances, the Econlockhatchee and St. Johns Rivers are at risk from dredging." - Mary Jean Yon, Legislative Director, Audubon Florida

"This bill weakens the power of locally elected boards by eliminating the supermajority vote requirement for new development." – David Cullen, Sierra Club

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