

# Disappointing Bills HB 7005 and SB 552 Progress Through Legislature

December 1, 2015

Bob Palmer sent out the following update on the pending water bills now making their way through the Legislature:

TO: Members, FL Springs Council

FROM: Bob Palmer, Chair of the FSC Legislative Committee

SUBJ: UPDATE: Status of Water Legislation for the 2016 Legislative Session



Bob Palmer

The House and Senate water bills (HB 7005 and SB 552) have both run the gauntlet of their respective Committees, clearing them for House and Senate Floor action early in 2016. The bills underwent only minimal changes in the committee process, and language in the two bills continues to be identical. I expect that the bills will zip through the two Houses in January.

As detailed in earlier memos, FSC's position is that these bills will not restore springs in the foreseeable future and we therefore oppose their passage. Nothing changed during the committee process to alter our view. Our position is not inflexible; we have explained to members and staff that with adoption of a small group of our amendments – four or five – FSC will support the bill. So far, there seems to be little interest in accommodating our suggestions.

Other environmental groups also have significant concerns with the bills, as detailed in the attached letter to House and Senate leaders from a large cross-section of environmental groups. Some of the more active environmental lobbyists in Tallahassee are continuing to lobby staff and members to make changes in the bill. The most active organizations in this regard are Sierra Club and 1000 Friends of Florida.

Senior Democratic staff in the House and Senate have indicated to me that their bosses are considering offering some of the FSC-drafted amendments on the Floor in January. I guess time will tell.

Feel free to contact me with any questions at [352-371-4093](tel:352-371-4093) or [rpa711@yahoo.com](mailto:rpa711@yahoo.com)