

June 18, 2004

Ms. Glenda E. Hood
Secretary of State
R. A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Secretary Hood:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of Florida, under the provisions of Article III, Section 8, of the Constitution of Florida, I do hereby withhold my approval of and transmit to you with my objections, House Bill 817, enacted during the 106th Session of the Legislature of Florida, since Statehood in 1845, convened under the Constitution of 1968, during the Regular Session of 2004, and entitled:

An act relating to Spring Lake Improvement District . . .

The bill amends and codifies the existing chapter law of the Spring Lake Improvement District. The amendments to the district charter include, but are not limited to: 1) increasing the number of board members from three to five; 2) increasing the term limits of members from three to four years; and 3) revising the authorized uses of taxes and assessments.

My review of local bills is guided by a long standing local bill policy. The foundation of this policy is local control and awareness of changes to a special district's authority. Local bills should provide for a referendum (of the citizens in the affected area(s)) if they propose a change in taxation (ad-valorem or other), fees, assessments, or bonding authority, or a change in voting procedures, elections, or composition (membership of board or of those voting) for local governments, commissions, special districts or school districts. The bill has the potential to shift the current tax burden from those taxpayers receiving the benefit of the assessment supported activity to taxpayers with higher assessed property values.

Because of the potential shift in the tax burden this bill presents, I am unwilling to approve this bill without a voter approved referendum.

Ms. Glenda E. Hood
June 18, 2004
Page Two

For these reason, I therefore withhold my approval of House Bill 817 and veto the same.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bush