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Representative Casello and Senator Taddeo Re-File Legislation Aimed at Fighting Abuse of Florida's Water Supply Tallahassee, Fla. – Determined to end the exploitation of Floridians by giving away the state's spring water for free, **Representative Joe Casello (D-Palm Beach)** and **State Senator Annette Taddeo (D-Miami)** have filed [HB 473](#) and [SB 798](#). This proposed legislation will impose fees on bottle water operators for extracting water from State waters, including water from our Florida Springs. The proceeds will be deposited in the Wastewater Treatment and Stormwater Management Revolving Loan Trust Fund, which will be eligible for federal matching funds, and prioritize resources for septic to sewer and water infrastructure projects throughout the State.

This is the third year for **Senator Taddeo** and second year for **Representative Casello** in filing this legislation, which was in response to the Nestle Corporation's attempts to maintain and expand ongoing water pumping operations at Ginnie Springs. 'BlueTriton Brands' who recently bought the bottling operations from Nestle at Ginnie Springs, after seeking to pump nearly 1.2 million gallons daily, pays a meager \$115 permit, but nothing for the valuable water it extracts. Last year, [that permit to expand operations was granted despite ongoing community and environmental opposition.](#)

Senator Taddeo issued the following statement: "This is a corporate welfare loophole that has allowed some companies to exploit our precious water supply. It is unconscionable that certain corporate water bottling companies exploit our state water, without paying their fair share, while all other companies who bottle water through municipalities pay for their water. Florida does not give away-for free- the extraction of other minerals, as such this bill will help us end this abuse of our most precious resource, our water. At a time when we desperately need funding for septic to sewer projects, we should not be giving bottling companies our springs water for free."

Representative Casello offered the following statement: "I am refileing this legislation because freshwater is not a sustainable resource and thinking otherwise is taking this precious commodity for granted. 'BlueTriton Brands' who recently bought the bottling operations from Nestle at Ginnie Springs stand to continue raking in billions. We cannot stand by while the industry drains our State and profits off resources that belong to all Floridians, for the price of a \$115 permit fee."

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