



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

June 26, 2007

Mr. Kurt S. Browning
Secretary of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Secretary Browning:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of the state 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 my objections to Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 900, enacted during the 39th Session of the Legislature of Florida, convened under the Constitution of 1968, during the Regular Session of 2007 and entitled:

An act relating to initiative petitions ...

This bill provides voters with the ability to revoke their signature on the ballot initiative petitions they sign. This bill also imposes a strict 30-day deadline for the submission of initiative petitions to the Supervisors of Elections for verification. If the initiative petitions are not submitted within 30 days of the date the petitions are signed by voters, the petitions cannot be verified and are automatically rendered invalid. This provision significantly burdens the right of Florida citizens to propose amendments to the Florida Constitution by increasing the likelihood that voters, through no fault of their own, will be denied the opportunity to have their voices heard.

Floridians are guaranteed the right to participate in the political process and to amend the Constitution via citizen initiatives. The right of Florida's citizens to petition their government is one of the most precious rights protected by the Bill of Rights and is fundamental to the very idea of a republican form of government. The right is older than Florida's statehood—it is among the core political principles on which our Nation was founded, and thus, defines us as Americans. Because the 30-day submission requirement in this bill unnecessarily restricts that right, it cannot be justified.

For the reasons stated above, I am hereby withholding my approval of Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 900 and do hereby veto the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie Crist".

Charlie Crist

CC/dmm