

Kathleen Passidomo
Senate President
409 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Via email: passidomo.kathleen.web@flsenate.gov

RE: Urban Fertilizer

Dear President Passidomo,

We write to you to express our support for allowing local governments to be able to create their own science-based rules to control nutrient pollution runoff and leaching which harm Florida's waters. We ask that you allow the current one-year moratorium on new or updated urban fertilizer ordinances to expire. While we may not yet know how to craft the "perfect" urban fertilizer ordinance, there is no doubt that ordinances need to be tailored to the local area to address local water quality issues. We strongly agree that we must reduce urban fertilizer pollution to achieve healthy waters, protect public health, and allow waterfront economies to thrive.

In an effort to help inform elected officials and policymakers, Dr. George Hochmuth and I reviewed the University of Florida report, Effectiveness of the timing of seasonal fertilizer restrictions on urban landscapes. We each have experience and knowledge in the urban water quality ordinance issue. Dr. Hochmuth is a University of Florida (UF/IFAS) Professor Emeritus of Soil, Water, and Ecosystems Sciences with particular expertise regarding urban fertilizer management; and I served as Vice-Chair of the 2007 Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force while Assistant Director of the Department of Water Resources at the St. Johns River Water Management District.

Our review focused on the six studies dealing with ordinances included in the IFAS report, and the following is made clear:

1. None of the referenced studies indicate or support a continued statewide moratorium.
2. All the referenced studies were limited (by nature) in their experimental design.

3. Most reported on a relatively short time-frame for instituting the ordinance and truly evaluating its effects.
4. There were mixed conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the ordinances summarized in the IFAS report, ranging from positive to no effect, however, none of the studies concluded that the ordinances were a detriment to urban water quality or urban landscapes.
5. Human nature plays a large role in the effectiveness of an ordinance and must be addressed locally.

Nothing in the studies reviewed in the UF/IFAS report supported a continued moratorium on urban fertilizer ordinances with “black-out” periods.

The research does however indicate, just as the [Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force determined in 2007](#), that urban fertilizer controls must be addressed at the local level, watershed by watershed, with regard to respective local waterfront economies. Both a “one-size-fits-all” statewide urban fertilizer rule and a moratorium on new local ordinances are completely contrary to water quality protection and landscape/turf health.

Dr. Hochmuth and I would be happy to discuss our findings with you or your staff.

Sincerely,



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