



JEB BUSH  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

# Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

May 25, 2004

Ms. Glenda E. Hood  
Secretary of State  
R.A. Gray Building  
500 South Bronough Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 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 Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 2804, enacted during the 36th Session of the Legislature of Florida convened under the Constitution of 1968, during the Regular Session of 2004, and entitled:

An act relating to greenways and trails.

The bill recognizes and extends the Florida National Scenic Trail. The bill refines the terms for members of Florida Greenways and Trails Council, provides for some efficiencies within the Office of Greenways and Trails, and creates a Conserve by Bicycle Program with the Florida Department of Transportation. All of these are commendable legislative efforts and I would recommend the Department of Environmental Protection consider these issues for the next legislative session.

However, the bill exempts a non-profit corporation from state fiscal controls that have been established in statute and ensure accountability for taxpayer dollars. These established fiscal controls include: the requirement that services or goods be received by the state; that travel expenses be reimbursed as provided by general law; the prohibitions against nepotism and using state dollars to lobby the legislature; and provisions requiring competitive bidding. These exemptions could create a potentially dangerous precedent by removing oversight of recipients of taxpayer funding.

While Florida Mining-Recreation, Inc. is a non-profit corporation that performs the admirable task of transforming mining lands into recreational areas to be enjoyed by all our people, these exemptions are not good public policy. Furthermore, the withholding of my approval for this legislation will not prevent the Florida Mining-Recreation, Inc. from continuing its activities under the current grant process that currently exists at the Department of Environmental Protection.

Lastly, the bill provides a sales tax exemption for Florida Mining-Recreation, Inc. that is not justified. While reducing the tax burden of all Floridians remains a top priority,

Ms. Glenda E. Hood  
May 25, 2004  
Page Two

granting a sales tax exemption to a specific non-profit sets a bad precedent and only increases the tax burden, albeit incrementally, on the remaining taxpayers.

It is for these reasons above that I withhold my approval of Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 2804.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bush