2021 State Legislative Review

Preemptions, Redistricting, and Greenwashing Galore

Another Florida legislative session has come and gone, and the next one begins in just a few short months.

It was an especially arduous session for environmentalists and progressives alike. While there are bright spots worth recognizing, it should be noted that these victories do not outweigh the environmental and democratic losses that Florida suffered this session. Not even close.

Here's a look at what went down and what to expect in the future. For specifics on individual bills, head to the final pages of this review.

Victories

First and foremost: thank you! Volunteers across the state made calls, sent emails, signed petitions, wrote letters to the editor, attended meetings with state representatives, and shared information on social media. You are what makes our organization great!

There was important movement on the dangerous toll road project known as M-CORES. The legislation that passed¹ eliminates the M-CORES program, but not all the roads included in the program. This is not a repeal of all three Roads to Ruin, but it is meaningful progress, especially given it originally passed with nearly unanimous support. The fight for sustainable transportation alternatives continues.

Initiatives including electric vehicle infrastructure, solar energy for schools, and limitations on cigarette smoking on beaches and in parks moved forward but didn't make it across the finish line. These will hopefully return in the coming 2022 session and become law.

There were several small wins for the environment this year, from Complete Streets and urban agriculture, to recognition for the Florida Wildlife Corridor and increased funding for land conservation and state parks (thanks in part to federal boosts in funding).

Greenwashing

"Greenwashing" is deceptive marketing used to persuade the public into thinking something is environmentally friendly when it is not. Governor DeSantis has long touted his supposed environmental leanings, all while doing very little to actually protect, preserve, and expand Florida's natural resources. The conservative-led legislature worked hard to help him further greenwash his image. This is a trend that will likely continue in Florida, where elected officials recognize that voters truly care about the environment.

We now have state-recognized Springs Protection Awareness Month and Oceans Day, yet the legislature failed to pass even one recommendation from Governor DeSantis's own Blue Green Algae Task Force, the entity created to work on the perpetual problem of harmful algal blooms.

Last year for the first time we saw express acknowledgement of sea level rise in Florida legislation. This year House Speaker Chris Sprowls made it a top priority to pass a trio of bills aimed at funding some aspects of sea

¹ SB 100, Sen. Harrell, District 25, Loxahatchee Group area

level rise adaptation². This is movement in the right direction, but these bills fail to address the causes of sea level rise (climate change via greenhouse gas emissions) or protect those most vulnerable to its impacts. The programs funded in these bills are essentially grant programs for communities and homeowners. **These are not so much pro-environment bills as pro-property bills.** One bill³ permanently removes funding from the Sadowski Trust Fund which was created for the express purpose of increasing affordable housing. Forcing sea level rise adaptation to compete with affordable housing is a false choice; we can and must do both.

There aren't enough taxpayer dollars to hurricane-proof Florida. We cannot "adapt" our way out of climate change. We must mitigate the causes by reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses.

Anti-Clean Energy Preemptions

There are multiple pieces of anti-clean energy legislation being passed around in conservative playbooks across the country, and some of them are unfortunately poised to become law in Florida.

One bill will prohibit mandatory beneficial electrification requirements, to hamstringing local governments' ability to implement and achieve clean energy transition targets, such as the popular Ready for 100 commitments made by 11 cities in Florida⁴. Another bill prohibits gas station bans, making the transition to electric vehicles more difficult⁵. Yet another bill rebrands biogas as a "renewable energy" so that corporate utilities can build out natural gas infrastructure while making even more money from ratepayers through cost recovery⁶. That "renewable natural gas bill" includes preemption over industrial solar power plant siting⁷ that removes local control over placement of these potentially massive power plants. Read more on this in the *Transparency* section below.

It would be one thing if our state's leadership were putting these energy preemptions in place while enacting strong, greenhouse gas reduction strategies statewide. But they're not. Florida's leaders are working hard to prevent local communities from tackling climate change while refusing to do it themselves.

These attacks on local solutions to climate change show how seriously the oil and gas industry views local action as a threat to their bottom lines. It's simultaneously a point of pride for clean energy activists across our state and another hurdle that we must overcome.

Transparency and Democracy

Participating in the legislative process has never been easy or accessible for most Floridians, but Governor DeSantis, President Simpson, and Speaker Sprowls put even larger barriers in place this year, all under the guise of pandemic protocols. They drastically reduced the number of people able to speak in public comment, forced average people to navigate a cumbersome speaker registration process, and refused entry to our state capitol to those without identification. Committee leadership such as Senate Rules Committee Chair Kathleen Passidomo and House Justice Committee Chair Daniel Perez followed suit by frequently limiting public comment to 1 minute, or even 30 seconds, per speaker.

² SB 1892, Sen. Diaz, District 36, Miami Group; SB 1954, Sen. R. Rodrigues, District 27, Calusa Group; SB 2514, Sen. Stargel, District 22, Ancient Islands Group and Central Florida Group

³ SB 2512, Senate Appropriations Committee - conforming bill

⁴ HB 919, Rep. Tomkow, District 39, Central Florida Group and Ancient Islands Group

⁵ HB 839, Rep. Fabricio, District 103, Broward Group and Miami Group

⁶ SB 896, Sen. Brodeur, District 9, Volusia-Flagler Group and Central Florida Group

⁷ SB 1008, Sen. Hutson, District 7, Northeast Group and Volusia-Flagler Group; and HB 761, Rep. Overdorf, District 83, Loxahatchee Group

While these restrictions were effectively boxing Floridians out from participating at the Capitol, Governor DeSantis continued to put workers and high-risk Floridians at risk by opening the entire State. The Governor's mansion, however, stayed closed to the public. Then, the very week after the legislative session concluded, the entire Capitol was opened up and all so-called pandemic restrictions were lifted.

Even without detailing the egregious attacks on voter participation and first amendment rights via the Florida Voter Suppression Bill⁸ and the Anti-Public Protest bill, HB 1⁹, **one might justly see these barriers as an attempt to end public participation in our State's democracy entirely.**

One reason the conservative leaders of the State may have wanted to reduce our ability to poke around could be the impressively undemocratic methods they used to ram bad bills through the process.

The industrial solar power plant siting preemption mentioned above was never heard in a committee. That means this preemption should have died in the legislative process, but elected leaders worked together in back rooms to push this language through.

A seaport preemption bill¹⁰ that overturns a wildly successful pro-environment ballot initiative out of Key West died in the process but was brought back to life¹¹, like a zombie bent on destroying smart environmental incentives.

Representative Ingoglia filed an enormous amendment to the Voter Suppression Bill at 1:33 am to frustrate attempts at reducing the immensely harmful impact of the bill.

These are the actions of a State controlled by a single party.

Let us not forget the actions from this session. Legislators are typically on better behavior when an election is approaching, hoping that Floridians will forget wrongdoings from the previous year. We can and must hold them accountable.

Staff Stepped Up

The Chapter lost key staff members to retirement and voluntary layoffs in 2021 and is filling those and newly created positions to expand our capacity. The workload has been heavy for all, but despite these hardships, Sierra Club Florida staff stepped up in unprecedented ways to strengthen our impact and use innovative methods.

Redistricting

Based on the results of the 2020 Census, Florida will gain 1 seat in the US House of Representatives. The Florida House Redistricting Committee and the Senate Reapportionment Committee were created in the state legislature, but will not meet until next session. A significant issue next session will be fighting off gerrymandering attempts.

⁸ SB 90, Sen. Baxley, District 12, Suwannee St John's Group, Ancient Islands Group, and Central Florida Group

⁹ HB 1, Rep. Fernandez-Barquin, District 119, Miami Group

¹⁰ HB 267, Rep. Sirios, District 51, Turtle Coast; SB 426, Sen. Boyd, District 21, Manatee-Sarasota Group and Tampa Bay Group

¹¹SB 1194, Sen. Hooper, District 16, Suncoast Group, Tampa Bay Group, and Adventure Coast Group

What's Next

Bills that passed both chambers of the Florida legislature can be sent to Governor DeSantis anytime over the next few months. He then has 3 options. He has 15 days to veto the bill, sign it into law, or allow it to become law without his signature. Bills are typically sent at opportune times during the summer to either highlight or obfuscate their impact. 248 bills of statewide impact and 24 local bills passed this year, and 33 have already become law as of this writing.

Governor DeSantis has an opportunity to veto the remaining anti-environment and anti-democracy bills if he truly wants to claim the "Teddy Roosevelt conservative" moniker, though his rapid signing of the Right to Harm Act¹² and the Voter Suppression bill do not bode well. Check for updates on the Florida Chapter website.

Legislator score cards are forthcoming, also on the website. **July is an ideal time to set up meetings with your state representatives.** The 2022 legislative session begins with pre-session committee meetings this September. Then the 60-day session convenes on January 11 and runs through March 11.

Every legislative session brings lessons and opportunities and this year was no different. We will learn from this year's successes and failures, and adjust accordingly to become an even more effective advocacy organization for the sake of our air, land, water, health, and democracy.

We continue to push forward with your help. Let's take these opportunities to embrace new ways of operating, fight the good fight, and **explore**, **enjoy**, **and protect** the Sunshine State as a united force for good.

¹² SB 88, Sen. Brodeur, District 9, Volusia-Flagler Group and Central Florida Group

2021 Legislation

To put the 2021 session in context – Sierra Club Florida requested Gov. DeSantis to veto 12 bills and did not ask him to sign any. Bills we supported never made it through the committee process and most did not receive even one hearing. The bills of greatest concern that we opposed fell into the categories of energy, water, land, air, and democracy. Some involved more than one category, and preemption was frequently the means by which bad policy was achieved and progress stymied.

For a larger and more positive context, we have to look at the national picture where the Presidency, as well as the House, and by the thinnest of margins the Senate, are all controlled by Democrats. "Elections have consequences," and the national picture is much more favorable than during the four years previous. Not only that, but the President's American Recovery Act provided funding, some of which the legislature allocated to land acquisition and springs. Thank you, President Biden.

The below list of bills provides the Governor's actions as of June 15, 2021. You can view updates on the Governor's Action on Legislation report at this <u>link</u>. The report is divided into three sections: bills originating in the Senate, bills originating in the House, and relevant statistics. The report is updated three times a day, and you can find out if a bill has been presented to the Governor, how long he has to act on it, and what, if any action he has taken.

What follows is a review of the legislation we were most involved with. Most of it revolves around the bills we asked for vetoes on, but there was other legislation worth noting, for good or ill.

Environmental Bills of Interest to Sierra Club Florida

ENERGY

Legislation	Position	Status
House Bill 839 ends local authority (through preemption to the State) to ban gas	Oppose	Passed and
stations and related infrastructure. The preemption is not retrospective, but unless a		will be sent
locality adopts a ban on gas stations before the Governor signs the bill it won't		to the
matter since no local government has instituted such a ban. The bill also doesn't		Governor
allow mandating any required infrastructure on fuel retailers, including electric		
vehicle charging stations. This will pose a challenge in a few years when a bigger		
push for EVs and overall transportation electrification will be in the works. As filed,		
this bill was the greatest threat to this session to our clean energy work as it would		
have stopped local governments from doing anything to restrict or prohibit		
infrastructure supporting fossil fuels or requiring clean renewable ones. While we		
still oppose the results, the outcome could have been far worse.		
Senate Bill 896 re-classifies landfill gas and factory farm biogas as a form of	Oppose	Passed and
renewable energy. Methane, the main component in natural gas and biogas, is the		will be sent
second most prevalent greenhouse gas in the U.S. behind carbon dioxide. Although		to the
carbon dioxide has a longer-lasting effect, methane's warming power is much		Governor
higher. Incentivizing its production by permitting cost recovery for the higher cost		
of "renewable" natural gas gouges consumers and will lead to increased fugitive		
emissions from landfills and concentrated animal feeding operations. A late-added		
amendment stops city and county leaders from having any say over the siting of		
utility-scale solar projects—a practice that has historically allowed predatory		

corporate targeting of environmental justice communities. This is an end-run		
around local comprehensive plans and provisions designed to help local		
communities achieve the best use of the jurisdiction's lands. It eliminates local input		
and control over industrial power plant siting. Sites that were the subject of an		
application to construct a solar facility submitted to a local governmental entity		
before July 1, 2021, are exempted.		
House Bill 919 prohibits local governments (through preemption to the State)	Oppose	Passed and
from enacting or enforcing any policy that restricts or prohibits types of fuel		will be sent
sources, specifically, electricity, natural gas, and liquid petroleum gas. It eliminates		to the
municipalities' ability to move toward clean energy in residential and commercial		Governor
building codes. For example, amending a local building code to eliminate natural		
gas service in new construction is prohibited. Further, the bill also prohibits local		
actions that "have the effect of" restricting or prohibiting these types of fuel		
sources. This will open local governments to lawsuits if they adopt any policy that		
reduces a type of energy's market share. Refusing to purchase fracked gas, for		
example, would "have the effect of" restricting its sale. The bill does allow municipal		
utilities to pass rules, regulations, or policies to govern the utility. This exemption		
for municipal utilities covers approximately 3 million customers, leaving about 18		
million Floridians locked into the energy status quo.		
Senate Bill 630 provides another example of the natural gas industry's	Oppose	Passed and
determination to expand its reach. Inserted in this bill is a section devoted to		will be sent
obtaining for owners of natural gas-powered vehicles the same ability to install		to the
fueling equipment in their condominium parking area that electric vehicle owners		Governor
have for their EVs – except, of course, this would be natural gas fueling.		

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Legislation	Position	Status
Senate Bill 88 clearly favors "farm operations" and is biased against any party who	Oppose	Signed by
may be injured by them and seeks justice through the courts. It is designed to gut		the
the class action suit against Big Sugar for injury to western Palm Beach County		Governor
residents caused by smoke and ash from the outdated practice of pre-harvest sugar		
field burning by changing the state laws on which that case will be decided. It limits		
standing to sue to those within a 1/2 mile of the burning despite smoke plumes		
traveling more than 26 miles, limits any damages to the amount a plaintiff's		
property value is diminished (despite there being no nexus between property		
values and health), restrains the court from holding a farm liable unless the plaintiff		
proves (using a higher than usual standard of proof for civil cases) that the farm did		
not comply with state or federal environmental laws, prohibits punitive damages		
unless the plaintiff can show the defendant was guilty of the same conduct within		
three years of the conduct that spurred the suit, and provides that the plaintiff, if		
they lose, has to pay the defendant's fees, costs, and expenses.		
Senate Bill 628 recognizes the value of urban agriculture and its differences from	Support	Passed and
the rural variety and recognizes the ability of urban agriculture to spur economic		will be sent
development by providing for fresh foods in city centers, community revitalization,		to the
and the adaptive reuse of vacant lands. It authorizes pilot programs in 5		Governor
municipalities with populations of at least 250,000 to last for three years, with an		

option to renew for an additional 3 years. The bill also recognizes that the	
municipalities must have the ability to regulate agriculture within their boundaries	ı
and lifts the protections of the "Right to Farm Act."	1

LAND

Legislation	Position	Status
House Bill 421 inserts subsurface rights and mineral estates into the definition of	Oppose	Passed
"real property" which gives an oil or gas developer a legal wedge to force a locality		and will
or the Department of Environmental Protection to refrain from actions that would		be sent to
"inordinately burden" the property by preventing fracking or other oil or gas		the
exploration and production. For local governments, this could include their		Governor
objection to issuance of a permit for drilling within 3 miles of their corporate limits.		
If the oil/gas industry is denied a permit to drill, they will, pursuant to the Bert Harris		
Act, be able to include an appraisal of the value of oil or gas thousands of feet		
below the ground that "demonstrates the loss in fair market to the real property."		
This threat would potentially put millions of tax dollars at risk and will force		
localities to risk either bankruptcy or the impacts of drilling.		
Senate Bill 487 increases by 500% the acreage threshold that qualifies as a "small	Oppose	Passed
scale comprehensive plan amendment." Amendments of 50 acres, or 100 acres in		and will
rural areas, would now qualify as "small scale." This kind of amendment requires		be sent to
only a single hearing by the local governing board; no review by the Department of		the
Economic Opportunity (DEO) or any other agency is needed. This statutory change		Governor
follows previous legislation which eliminated the annual cumulative 120-acre cap		
for small scale amendments. While small scale amendments are not supposed to		
include text changes to the plan, they do involve text changes that are related to		
the Future Land Use Map. With this larger acreage qualifying for small scale		
amendments, potentially major changes will occur in multiple 50- and 100-acre		
amendments with no State oversight.		
Senate Bill 976 started out to be a study of what is causing sedimentation of the	Support	Passed
Little Wekiva River (assumed by many to be the construction activity on I-4) and		and will
requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the St. Johns River		be sent to
Water Management District (SJRWMD) to review any permits north of State Road		the
436 to assess whether a permittee is in violation of permit conditions and take		Governor
appropriate action to resolve compliance issues. DEP/SJRWMD are to review known		
permit violations that have occurred since 2018 and attempt to determine what		
effects such violations may have had on sediment accumulation in the Little Wekiva		
River. The bill was amended to include aspirational language for the Florida Wildlife		
Corridor charging DEP with encouraging State land buying/ land managing		
agencies to consider listing "opportunity areas" (green spaces that are not currently		
in conservation status and can serve to connect sections of the corridor) in their		
land buying plans.		

PLASTICS

Legislation	Position	Status
Senate Bill 694 provide an 18 month "golden parachute" for waste management	None	Passed
companies that a local government wants to replace. An amendment was added		and will
that directs Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to update its 2010 report on		be sent to
single-use bags, auxiliary wrappings, etc. analyzing the need for new or different		

regulation of these recyclable materials. The 2009 legislation included a provision	the
that would have sunset the preemption of plastic bags based on the legislature	Governor
adopting the recommendations of the 2010 study (which the legislature never did).	
However, it is an opportunity to work toward eliminating unnecessary plastic waste.	

TRANSPORTATION

Legislation	Position	Status
Senate Bill 100 repealed all of M-CORES, but retains some of its problems. While it	None	Passed
eliminates the SW-Central corridor, it continues to call for an extension of the		and will
Florida Turnpike from Wildwood up to the northwest to a "logical terminus", and it		be sent to
calls for making US 19 a limited access road going north from the Suncoast		the
Parkway all the way to I-10. We remained silent on the bill due to our membership		Governor
on the No Roads to Ruin (NRTR) Steering Committee which issued the following		
statement: The NRTR Coalition Steering Committee cannot support SB100 in its		
current form because of the potential for new toll roads through important natural		
and rural areas. We will oppose SB 100 until the possibility of a Northern Turnpike		
Connector is removed from the bill. Any expansion to existing roadways should		
depend upon the demonstration of need and fiscal feasibility while not negatively		
impacting our water and natural resources, rural communities, communities of color,		
and agricultural lands. We support a full repeal of M-CORES and its funding of all		
programs associated with the Southwest-Central, Northern Turnpike, and Suncoast		
Corridors through passage of SB 1030 and HB 763.		
Senate Bill 950 does not mention "Complete Streets" but it does make some good	Support	Passed
changes with respect to safety for those sharing the road with automobiles		and will
including: defining the terms "bicycle lane" and "separated bicycle lane"; providing		be sent to
requirements for a vehicle overtaking a bicycle or other nonmotorized vehicle, an		the
electric bicycle, or a pedestrian occupying the same travel lane; requiring the		Governor
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to provide an		
awareness campaign regarding vehicles overtaking a bicycle, other nonmotorized		
vehicle, an electric bicycle, or a pedestrian; providing that no-passing zones do not		
apply to drivers who safely and briefly drive to the left of center of the roadway to		
overtake a bicycle, other nonmotorized vehicle, an electric bicycle, or a pedestrian;		
requiring a vehicle making a right turn while overtaking and passing a bicycle		
proceeding in the same direction, to do so only if the bicycle is at least 20 feet from		
the intersection; authorizes bicyclists riding in groups, after coming to a full stop, to		
go through an intersection in groups of 10 or fewer; guidelines for riding a bicycle		
in a substandard-width lane and authorizes riders to ride two abreast if certain		
conditions exit; and requiring at least 25 questions in the test bank for the driver		
license test to address bicycle and pedestrian safety.		

WATER

Legislation	Position	Status
Senate Bill 64 continues the unwise practice of injecting treated wastewater into	Oppose	Passed
aquifers for eventual potable use There are millions of chemicals and we test for		and will
only about 300 of them. Humans invent/use new chemicals all the time, and many		be sent to
find their way into the wastewater stream. These include contaminants of emerging		

concern (CECs) such as endocrine disruptors, pharmaceuticals, nanoplastics,	the
personal care products, and the metabolites of licit/illicit drugs. Our drinking water	Governor
standards and testing/purification regime is effective for controlling microbial	
contamination, but is inadequate for dealing with CECs which may have long-term	
chronic or cumulative effects. CECs injected into a drinking water aquifer for a	
decade or more will be just about impossible to remove if significant public health	
threats are identified. Public water systems may be able to institute an aggressive	
(expensive) response private wells will not.	

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	by a local ballot initiative or referendum by a port that has received or is eligible for		and will
	state funding, and thereby preempts and overturns the legitimate and decisive vote		be sent to
	on 3 ballot initiatives by Key West's citizens to protect the environment on which		the
	the city's economy depends that limits the use of their port to ships that (1) have		Governor
	fewer than 1500 disembarkations, (2) have the best safety and environmental		
	records, and (3) have no more than 1300-person capacity.		
	Senate Bill 2516 will use \$50 million annually from the Land Acquisition Trust Fund	Oppose	Passed
	to purchase pumps and pipes for aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) wells on the		and will
	north side of Lake Okeechobee instead of acquiring floodplains for water storage,		be sent to
	treatment, and conveyance south. This is a water storage scheme for agriculture,		the
	not ecosystem restoration. It is a short-term scheme because increasing sea level		Governor
	rise and the accompanying increase in total dissolved solids (mostly salt) will		
	require expensive reverse osmosis or similar measures to maintain even the ability		
	to use the water for irrigation. ASR wells will not be able to pump water below the		
	ground quickly enough during intense storm events to adequately diminish		
	discharges to the east and west estuaries. We recommend acquiring flood plain and		
	restoring wetlands which would accomplish both Everglades and Florida Bay		
	restoration and protect communities to the east and west.		
Ī	Senate Bill 1086, a 69-page transportation bill on the operation and safety of	Support	Passed
	motor vehicles and vessels, includes a section that gives the Fish and Wildlife		and will
	Commission (FWC) the ability to establish protection zones for springs. These can		be sent to
	include speed limits or prevent anchoring, mooring, beaching, or grounding of		the
	vessels. This protection will help seagrasses to recover.		Governor

Oppose

Passed

Senate Bill 1194 retrospectively invalidates any restriction of maritime commerce

WILDLIFE

Legislation	Position	Status
Senate Bill 776 increases the penalties for the illegal sale, purchase collection,	Support	Passed
harvest, capture, or possession of wild animal life, freshwater aquatic life, or marine		and will
life, and related crimes by including these activities in the definition of		be sent to
"Racketeering activity."		the
		Governor

Democracy Bills of Interest to the Sierra Club

Legislation	Position	Status
House Bill 1 is aimed at clamping down on social-justice demonstrations, the	Opposed	Signed by
"anti-protest" bill increases penalties for crimes committed during protests, and		the
also allows even peaceful protesters and uninvolved bystanders to be swept up		Governor
and hauled in by police during protests where violence occurs. The law gives more		
authority for prosecutors to charge people with felonies during protests and		
allows police to have broader arresting powers during protests. It also makes it		
harder for local governments to reduce their law enforcement budgets. The bill will		
have an effect on all Floridians' First Amendment rights — it chills free speech,		
quells dissent, and criminalizes peaceful protesters.		
Senate Bill 90 makes changes to elections administration that are designed to	Opposed	Signed by
discourage and disenfranchise voters that Republican leadership believes will vote		the
Democratic. The legislation changes Florida's vote-by-mail system, including		Governor
restricting drop box use to a county's early voting hours rather than allowing		
ballots to be dropped off 24/7, making in-person monitoring of all drop box		
locations mandatory, limiting the ability of volunteers to collect ballots from those		
with mobility challenges to deliver them to drop boxes or to voting locations, as		
well as a whole host of other security measures for vote-by-mail. Voters also would		
be required to submit vote-by-mail requests every election cycle instead of every		
two cycles. The bill increases the size of the no solicitation zone from 100 to 150		
feet and provides that nothing may be given to those in the zone, including water,		
food, or a chair except by election staff.		
Senate Bill 1890 is the legislature's latest assault on citizen initiatives. It will	Opposed	Signed by
hamstring efforts to gather the huge number of petitions (a total of 885,397 from		the
at least 14 congressional districts) without being able to raise serious money to		Governor
pay people to collect them. No one will be able to contribute more than \$3,000		
until after all the petitions are signed. The U.S. Supreme Court has concluded that		
the circulation of initiative petitions represents core political speech and merits the		
highest level of protection. Campaigns run on money; starving the initiative		
campaign of money means an issue will die because there isn't enough money to		
pay for fast and broad petition circulation rather than because it is a bad idea.		
House Joint Resolution 61 would have increased the percentage of elector votes	Opposed	Did not
required to approve a Constitutional Amendment or revision from three fifths		pass. Died
(60%) to two thirds (66 2/3%). It also would have limited the majority required to		in Senate
repeal a constitutional amendment to the majority that was required to adopt it		Rules
thereby making it even more difficult to adopt constitutional amendments while		Committee.
making it easier to repeal those already adopted.		