

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** HB 1479 Land Application of Septage

**SPONSOR(S):** Coley

**TIED BILLS:** None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** None

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Agriculture & Natural Resources Subcommittee	10 Y, 5 N	Deslatte	Blalock
2) State Affairs Committee			

### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

During the 2010 session, SB 550 was passed by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor. The bill contained a number of provisions relating to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. The bill created a statewide septic tank evaluation program and required the Department of Health (DOH) to undertake rulemaking and implement the first phase of the evaluation program by January 1, 2011, with full statewide implementation by January 1, 2016. During the 2010 special session, the Legislature extended the implementation date to July 1, 2011. The bill also prohibited the land application of septage from onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems by January 1, 2016. In addition, the bill required that the DOH, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), provide a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, recommending alternative methods to establish enhanced treatment levels for the land application of septage from onsite sewage and disposal systems by February 1, 2011.

The bill repeals the prohibition on the land application of septage from septic tank pumpouts that goes into effect on January 1, 2016, and the requirement that DOH provide a report recommending alternative methods to establish enhanced treatment levels for the land application of septage from onsite sewage and disposal systems by February 1, 2011.

The bill has a positive fiscal impact on the DOH. The DOH currently has 92 land application sites permitted, with an annual fee of \$200 per site. Total revenue to the DOH for permitting these sites is \$18,400. Repealing the ban on land application of septage would allow the DOH to continue its current permitting program for these sites. The bill does not have a fiscal impact on local governments.

## FULL ANALYSIS

### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

##### Current Situation

During the 2010 session, SB 550 was passed by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor. The bill contained a number of provisions relating to onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. The bill created a statewide septic tank evaluation program and required the Department of Health (DOH) to undertake rulemaking and implement the first phase of the evaluation program by January 1, 2011, with full statewide implementation by January 1, 2016. During the 2010 special session, the Legislature extended the implementation date to July 1, 2011. The bill also prohibited the land application of septage from onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems by January 1, 2016. In addition, the bill required that the DOH, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), provide a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, recommending alternative methods to establish enhanced treatment levels for the land application of septage from onsite sewage and disposal systems by February 1, 2011.

##### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill repeals the prohibition on the land application of septage from septic tank pumpouts that goes into effect on January 1, 2016, and the requirement that DOH provide a report recommending alternative methods to establish enhanced treatment levels for the land application of septage from onsite sewage and disposal systems by February 1, 2011.

#### B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

**Section 1.** Amends s. 381.0065, F.S., terminating the future imposition of the prohibition of the land application of septage from onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.

**Section 2.** Providing an effective date.

### II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

#### A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

##### 1. Revenues:

The bill appears to have a positive fiscal impact on state government revenues (See Fiscal Comments Section).

##### 2. Expenditures:

None

#### B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

##### 1. Revenues:

None

##### 2. Expenditures:

None

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

According to the DOH analysis, land application of septage provides an additional alternative for disposal. With the termination of the ban on land application of septage, septic tank pumpers/septage haulers can continue business as usual. Without the termination of the ban on land application of septage, these businesses would, over the next five years, have had to find approved municipal wastewater treatment plants or biosolids receiving facilities that accept septage at a typically higher cost than land application due to driving distance and fees for disposal. These costs would also result in higher pumpout costs to people that own septic tanks.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

According to the DOH analysis, repeal of the termination on land application of septage allows the DOH to continue its current permitting program for these sites. DOH currently has 92 land application sites permitted, with an annual fee of \$200 per site. Total revenue to the DOH for permitting these sites is \$18,400.

**III. COMMENTS**

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not Applicable. This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take action requiring the expenditures of funds; reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate; or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None

**IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**