

**APOPKA CHIEF**, May 14, 2010

Editorial Page

A Message from Fred Brummer, Orange County Commissioner, Dist.2

**“Septic bill not great, but acceptable”**

The 2010 regular session of the Florida Legislature is over. The question is “How did homeowners who use septic systems fare?”

The answer is that homeowners with onsite treatment and disposal systems fared reasonably poorly but could have been treated considerably worse.

In one of the most bizarre and hateful parting shots from a termed-out legislator, a local state senator filed a bill that would have effectively expropriated the property rights of homeowners in the Wekiva Study Area, which includes all of Northwest Orange County.

Senate Bill 550 began as an excellent example of legislative directive trumping sound science. As proposed, the bill would have adopted vastly overreaching, scientifically unfounded and factually impossible to comply with numeric nutrient standards. It would have created additional levels of bureaucracy and ceded huge power to the bureaucrats. Fortunately, the bill was changed.

The section of the revised bill dealing with septic systems requires counties, cities, and special districts to follow the act. It requires that existing tanks be inspected and certified.

The law instructs that after January 1, 2011, the state Department of Health will commence an assessment program that will determine the operational success of septic systems. The evaluation will occur every five years. The inspection must be performed by a licensed septic contractor or master septic contractor. It cannot cost more than \$30 and there is a grant program for homeowners who will not be able to afford the cost of the inspection.

We need to say thank you to some of our local House members for their diligent work to remove more onerous provisions from the bill and for protecting both private property rights and the environment. Those House members include state representatives Bryan Nelson, Scott Plakon, Chris Dorworth, Eric Eisnaugle, Steve Precourt, and Alan Hays. It would be nice of you to send these people an e-mail of thanks.