



Florida House of Representatives

Democratic Office

Franklin Sands
Democratic Leader

Geraldine F. Thompson
Democratic Leader Pro Tempore

April 21, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist:

In recent years, Florida has revamped its election system and regained the confidence of voters. The benefits of these improvements were seen last November when record numbers of our citizens participated in the presidential election.

You took action last fall to bolster our election system and laws by signing an executive order that extended the hours of early voting and eliminated problematic touch-screen machines.

It would be a travesty for the Florida Legislature to take actions now that would reverse our state's progress toward making our elections more open and accessible.

Unfortunately, legislation has been proposed -- without justification -- that would disenfranchise voters and reverse much of the progress that has been made toward reforming elections in our state.

On behalf of the House Democratic Caucus, we strongly urge you to make known your opposition to House PCB-EDCA 09-08 and its Senate companion, SB956. Also, should either bill pass the Legislature in any manner similar to its current form, we would further request that you veto the legislation.

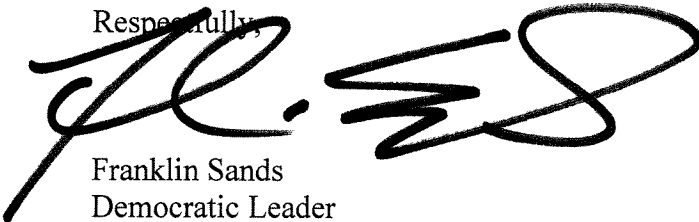
There is nothing more sacred than the right to vote and any legislation pertaining to this right deserves to be treated with extraordinary care and caution. As this bill currently reads, members of the House Democratic Caucus and numerous voter-advocacy and public interest groups find absolutely no justification for the radical changes entailed in this measure.

The flaws in this legislation are too numerous to identify completely in this correspondence, but some of the troubling impacts are that it would:

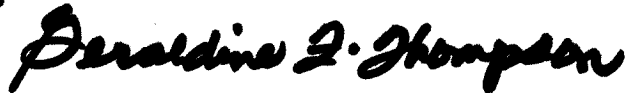
- Weaken campaign finance laws and make lawmakers less accountable to the public;
- Reduce transparency in the funding of political advertisements;
- Restrict the list of accepted forms of identification for voter registration and identification at the polls;
- Discourage voter protection efforts;
- Eliminate many voters' ability to vote a regular ballot on Election Day;
- Hurt third-party voter registration efforts;
- Make it much harder for grassroots groups to use the citizens' initiative process;
- Restrict nonpartisan election protection programs; and
- Limit the ability to extend early voting.

On behalf of our constituents throughout Florida, we sincerely request your urgent consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,



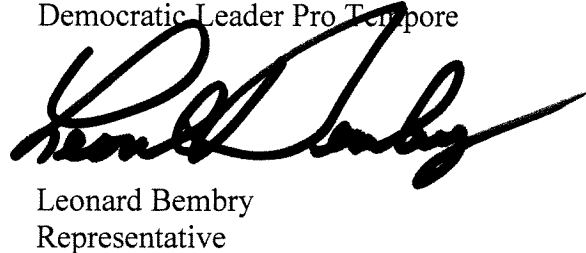
Franklin Sands
Democratic Leader



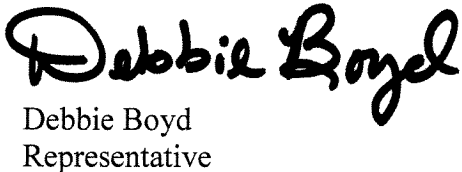
Geraldine F. Thompson
Democratic Leader Pro Tempore



Joseph Abruzzo
Representative



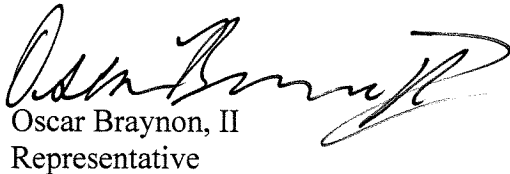
Leonard Bembry
Representative



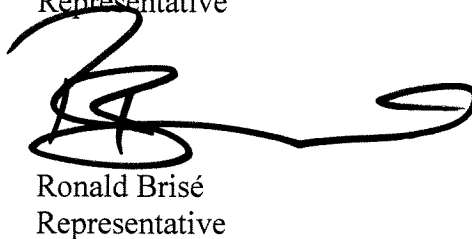
Debbie Boyd
Representative



Mary Brandenburg
Representative




Oscar Braynon, II
Representative




Ronald Brisé
Representative



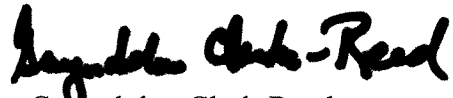
Dwight Bullard
Representative



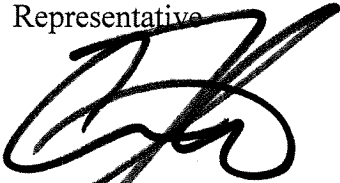
James Bush III
Representative



Charles Chestnut, IV
Representative




Gwendolen Clark-Reed
Representative



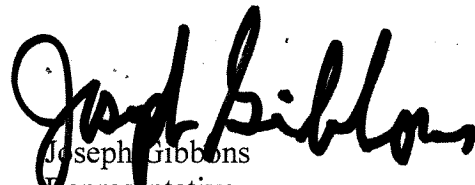
Adam Peterman
Representative




Keith Fitzgerald
Representative



Luis R. Garcia, Jr.
Representative




Joseph Gibbons
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Audrey Gibson
Representative



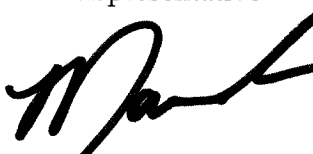
Bill Heller
Representative



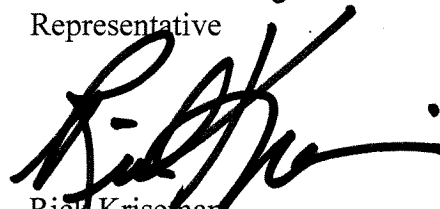
Evan Jerne
Representative



Mia Jones
Representative



Martin David Kiar
Representative



Rick Kriseman
Representative



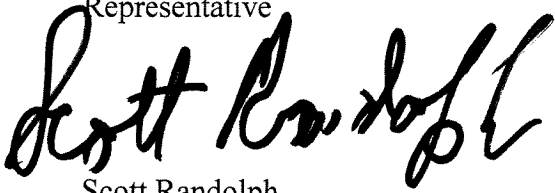
Janet C. Long
Representative



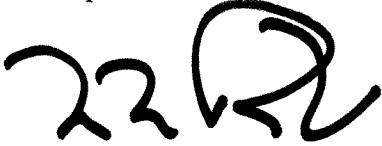
Mark Pafford
Representative



Ari Porth
Representative



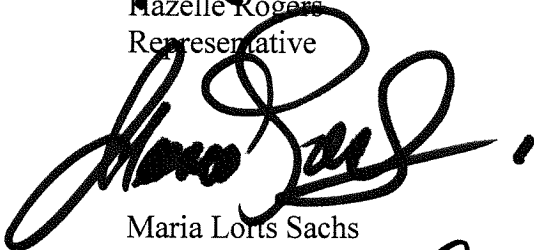
Scott Randolph
Representative



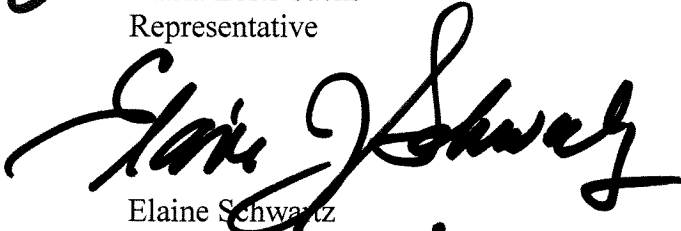
Michelle Rehwinkel-Vasilinda
Representative



Hazelle Rogers
Representative



Maria Lorts Sachs
Representative



Elaine Schwartz
Representative



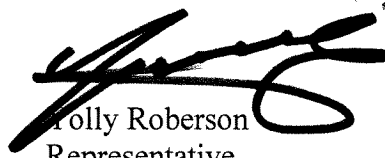
Kelly Skidmore
Representative



Kevin J.G. Rader
Representative



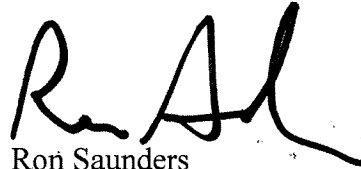
Betty Reed
Representative



Holly Roberson
Representative



Daryl Rouson
Representative



Ron Saunders
Representative



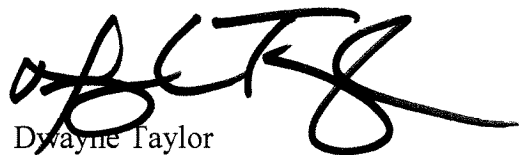
Michael Scionti
Representative



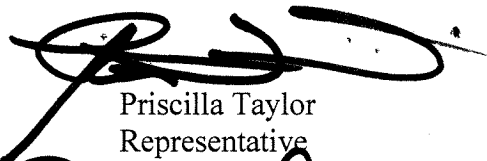
Darren Soto
Representative




Richard Steinberg
Representative



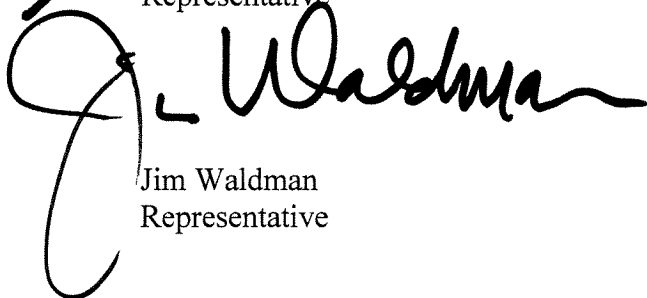
Dwayne Taylor
Representative



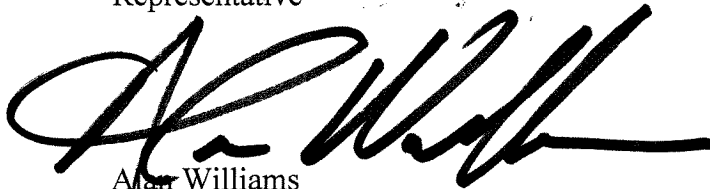
Priscilla Taylor
Representative



Perry E. Thurston, Jr.
Representative



Jim Waldman
Representative



Alan Williams
Representative