

# AD HOC COALITION OF CITIZEN, CIVIL RIGHTS AND VOTING RIGHTS GROUPS CALL UPON GOVERNOR CRIST TO OPPOSE AND VETO:

## Senate Bill 956 and House Bill 7149

April 22, 2009

Office of Governor Charlie Crist  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001  
Charlie.Crist@MyFlorida.com

Dear Governor Crist:

We, the below-signed organizations, write to respectfully request that you oppose companion election bills Senate Bill 956 and House Bill 7149, currently under consideration by the Florida legislature. We urge you to speak out forcefully against these bills, and to veto any resultant legislation, should it reach your desk.

These bills, designed to suppress the vote, may be enacted at the eleventh hour of the session with only minimal public consideration or legislative deliberation. Among other provisions, the bills would:

- Delay from 2012 to 2016 making accessible marksense (paper) ballots available statewide to voters with disabilities
- Restrict third-party voter registration efforts
- Make it much harder for grassroots groups to use the citizens' initiative process
- Restrict nonpartisan election protection programs
- Reduce transparency in the funding of political advertisements
- Bar more voters from casting a regular ballot on Election Day
- Restrict the list of accepted forms of identification for voter registration and identification at the polls
- Expand the ability of lobbyists to influence legislators and legislation
- Restrict the ability of the governor to extend early voting
- Grant sweeping and unchecked power to the Department of State at a time when some supervisors interpret election laws to protect and expand voter rights in their respective counties, in contrast to the state's restrictive interpretation of the same laws

These provisions needlessly infringe on the voting rights of Floridians, particularly those of historically disenfranchised communities, including elderly and low-income voters, and voters of color. Instead of fixing real problems—such as expanding access to early voting as you directed in November—they would disenfranchise eligible Floridians, for no legitimate reason and at significant taxpayer expense.

We respectfully urge you to right this wrong, and send a strong message to the legislature that you will not condone these unjustified and harmful measures.

For more information please contact Courtenay Strickland, Director of Public Policy, ACLU of Florida (305) 457-5422 cell or [cstrickland@aclufl.org](mailto:cstrickland@aclufl.org), or Carolyn Thompson, Voter Protection Advocate, Advancement Project cell (786) 278-2361 or [cthompson@advancementproject.org](mailto:cthompson@advancementproject.org).

Sincerely,

Advancement Project  
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Florida  
Broward Election Reform Coalition  
Business and Professional Women of Florida  
Central Florida Teamsters Union  
Clean Water Action  
Common Cause of Florida  
Democracia Ahora  
Equality Florida  
Florida AFL-CIO  
Florida Alliance for Retired Americans  
Florida Association of Planned Parenthood Affiliates  
Florida Acorn  
Florida Council of the Blind  
Florida Conservation Alliance  
Florida Consumer Action Network (FCAN)  
Florida Health Care Association  
Florida Immigrant Coalition  
Florida Fair Elections Coalition  
Florida National Organization for Women  
Florida Public Interest Research Group (PIRG))  
Florida State Conference NAACP  
Florida Veterans for Common Sense  
Florida Voters Coalition  
Haitian-American Grassroots Coalition  
Handicapped Adults of Volusia County (HAVOC)  
Human Services Coalition  
LatinoJustice PRLDEF  
Latino Leadership  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
League of Women Voters  
Miami-Dade Election Reform Coalition  
Miami Worker Center  
One Nation Volusia  
People for the American Way  
Palm Beach Coalition for Election Reform  
Project Vote  
Ruth's List Florida  
Sarasota Alliance for Fair Elections (SAFE)  
SEIU Florida  
Sierra Club  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Florida