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**Representative Lindsay Cross, Members of the Democratic Caucus and Environmental Groups Push Back on the Passage of Radioactive Roads Bill**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Today, **Representative Lindsay Cross (D-St. Petersburg), Representative Anna V. Eskamani (D-Orlando), Representative Yvonne Hinson (D-Gainesville), Representative Katherine Waldron (D-Wellington), Representative Johanna López (D-Orlando),** and others voted against the passage of [House Bill 1191/Senate Bill 1258](#) - Use of Phosphogypsum.

**HB 1191/SB 1258** authorizes the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) to evaluate using phosphogypsum (PG) as a construction aggregate material. It is a step towards potential widespread application in road construction, pending the reversal of prohibition by the US Environmental Protection Agency. The study, per the bill, lacks clear parameters to address the impact to human and environmental health; requires no approval by the Legislature; and provides no recourse for local communities that may oppose its use in their neighborhoods and public places.

Phosphogypsum is a byproduct of phosphate mining. In addition to causing water pollution, it contains radioactive material, including Radium-226, a byproduct of Radon, which is known to cause cancer. Exposure by workers during construction; road cracks, potholes, and standard resurfacing all create potentially dangerous levels of risk. While Florida undoubtedly has an excess PG problem, application of this radioactive byproduct should only be used following extensive peer-related studies utilizing Florida-derived phosphogypsum.

“Florida has the responsibility to protect its citizens. To use these radioactive materials in roads, without the necessary safety studies, is to put people in harm’s way. My common-sense amendments that would have put up guardrails in the studies and at the local level were rejected yesterday. When we fail to use science, omit important steps, or use biased studies; the environment and people of Florida pay the price,” said **Representative Lindsay Cross**.

“This is a dangerous policy proposal that opens up the door for Floridians to be exposed to toxic and radioactive materials. If we are going to explore this concept, we should do it alongside multiple departments and scientists, not through the Department of Transportation. Unfortunately, this is another example of corporate greed influencing the legislature and setting the agenda,” concluded **Representative Anna V. Eskamani**.

“Since 1992, the EPA has prohibited the use of phosphogypsum in roads, finding numerous scenarios that would expose the public, especially construction workers, to an unacceptable dangerous cancer risk,” said **Representative Yvonne Hinson**.

“Using phosphogypsum for roads requires rigorous studies to ensure it won’t harm those who travel on them and frankly, we have a long way to go. Skipping the necessary reports to the Legislature is irresponsible and puts the public’s health at risk,” said **Representative Katherine Waldron**.

**Representative Johanna López** offered the following, “My community and environmentalist organizations are alarmed by this highly dangerous bill which allows the use of phosphogypsum, a toxic product that contains radium and uranium. This radioactive material is going to affect our environment and the health of all Floridians. What is the true intent behind this bill? Why is this bill not prioritizing the well-being of our families?”

“The radium 226 in phosphogypsum has a half-life of 1,600 years but the fertilizer industry is tired of dealing with radioactive waste they generate mining phosphate. They want to sweep it under the pavement in our neighborhoods and around the state,” said **Dave Cullen, Sierra Club Florida**.

“A full-scale road project built with toxic and radioactive fertilizer industry waste will cause real environmental and human health harms,” said **Rachael Curran with People for Protecting Peace River**. “Road workers and contractors will be exposed to what studies and risk modeling have already shown is an unacceptable increased risk of fatal cancer, and eventually so will we all.”

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