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**Sent:** Wednesday, December 18, 2019 2:59 PM  
**To:** Throckmorton, Stephanie <[sthrockmorton@coralgables.com](mailto:sthrockmorton@coralgables.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Proposed Fertilizer Ordinance

Please include in the record.  
Thank you, Commissioner Keon

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "fgcsa@comcast.net" <[fgcsa@comcast.net](mailto:fgcsa@comcast.net)>  
**Date:** December 18, 2019 at 2:24:32 PM EST  
**To:** Commission Aides <[CommissionAides@coralgables.com](mailto:CommissionAides@coralgables.com)>, "Valdes-Fauli, Raul" <[rvaldes-fauli@coralgables.com](mailto:rvaldes-fauli@coralgables.com)>, "Lago, Vincente" <[vlago@coralgables.com](mailto:vlago@coralgables.com)>, Jorge Fors <[jfors@coralgables.com](mailto:jfors@coralgables.com)>, "Keon, Patricia" <[pkeon@coralgables.com](mailto:pkeon@coralgables.com)>, "Mena, Michael" <[mmena@coralgables.com](mailto:mmena@coralgables.com)>  
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**Subject:** Proposed Fertilizer Ordinance

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Dear Commissioners,

The Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association (Florida GCSA) thanks you for your continued efforts to minimize non-point nitrogen and phosphorous runoff from entering our waterways. The Florida GCSA and Florida's Green Industry professionals support the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's *Model Ordinance for Florida-Friendly Use of Fertilizer on Urban Landscapes* (FDEP Model Ordinance) as an important component of a comprehensive water quality strategy.

Healthy turf is critical to the environmental well-being of the City of Coral Gables. Healthy turf helps cool the environment, reduce carbon in the air around you, absorb sound, and trap dust and allergens. But perhaps the most important environmental and human health benefit of healthy turf is its ability to trap and filter runoff pollution that otherwise would flow into waterways. Turf must be healthy and strong to serve as this effective buffer against runoff, and most often this requires at least some amount of responsible fertilization.

Florida's golf course superintendents, lawn care professionals, sod growers, and other professionals in the green industries continue to do our part to minimize potential nitrogen and phosphorous loading into waterways through ongoing education on techniques and practices that work best for our environment. FDACS-licensed professional fertilizer applicators are trained, educated and certified on proper fertilization practices. There has been a great deal of scientific, peer-reviewed research conducted on urban landscape and fertilization and the consensus is clear – fertilizer properly applied to healthy turf results in almost zero leaching or runoff, even under extreme conditions of rain or slope of landscape. Professional lawn care operators and Golf Course Superintendents are your first line of defense against nutrient runoff making its way into the City of Coral Gables' waterways.

Our industry has taken proactive measures to demonstrate our responsibility to the environment. In 2012, the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association implemented a voluntary Golf Best Management Practices (BMP) Certification Program. This certification program was developed in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the University of Florida and the United States Golf Association Green Section. The goal was to agree on attainable management practices to keep golf a profitable business in Florida while protecting state water and natural resources, according to the Clean Water Act and other state and local ordinances. Participants receive training using the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's *Best Management Practices for the Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses*, which includes the following:

- Environmental Concepts
- Environmental Monitoring
- Design and Construction
- Irrigation
- Nutrition and Fertilization
- Cultural Practices
- Lake and Aquatic Plant Management
- Turfgrass Pest Management
- Pesticide Management
- Maintenance Operations

Upon completing the course and passing a final examination, participants are certified in the Florida Golf BMP Program. This certification is valid for a period of four years. In addition, Florida's Golf Course Superintendents are also highly regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Water Management Districts and the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Many of these existing regulations cover much of what is discussed in your proposed ordinance.

Our members enjoy and appreciate the surrounding environment and take great pride in protecting it. We would like for the Commission to consider allowing golf course turf to be exempt from the proposed changes to the draft ordinance while still requiring the use of Best

Management Practices for Florida Golf Courses. This exemption will allow golf courses in the City of Coral Gables to remain a viable employer, tax base and habitat for local wildlife.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Bryan  
Executive Director, Florida GCSA

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