

POLITICO: TALLAHASSEE — A fight over lawsuit language has led lawmakers to tank a data privacy bill that was among the most heavily lobbied of Florida's 2021 legislative session, according to three people involved with the measure.

“Next session [it] will be here,” said Sen. Jennifer Bradley, a Fleming Island Republican who sponsored the bill in the Senate.

Rep. Fiona McFarland (R-Sarasota), who sponsored the bill in the House, also confirmed that the measure is now dead.

“Bill won’t be coming back up today, but we worked too hard on it this year to let the issue go away. It will be back next year,” she said.

The bill included several provisions giving consumers more control over their private data collected by companies, but was fiercely opposed by the state’s business lobby. Those groups feared that language in the bill allowing consumers to sue over violations of the proposal would unleash a wave of lawsuits on state companies, while supporters of the bill said it was a needed enforcement mechanism.

The bill initially sailed through committee stops with bipartisan support, but got bogged down in recent weeks as the House and Senate took different versions and could not reconcile differences over the lawsuit provisions. The Senate amended its bill to give lawsuit authority only to Attorney General Ashley Moody, while the House maintained language that would allow any consumer to sue.

Those differences ended up sinking the bill.

“A Republican legislature was never going to pass the largest private cause of action in the history of Florida,” said a veteran lobbyist involved in killing the bill.

Both chambers passed their version of the legislation, with the Senate approving Thursday, but they could not resolve differences over the lawsuit piece headed into Friday, the final day of the legislative session.

The proposal has stirred intrigue for months because one of its biggest supporters was a mystery group called Propel Florida, which had hired Tallahassee-based lobbyists, spent \$300,000 in political contributions. But very [few directly involved in the process](#) had any idea who funded the group, including the bill sponsors.

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