

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to application of foreign law in
3 certain cases; creating s. 45.022, F.S.; providing
4 intent; defining the term "foreign law, legal code, or
5 system"; clarifying that the public policies expressed
6 in the act apply to violations of a natural person's
7 fundamental liberties, rights, and privileges
8 guaranteed by the State Constitution or the United
9 States Constitution; providing that the act does not
10 apply to a corporation, partnership, or other form of
11 business association, except when necessary to provide
12 effective relief in proceedings under or relating to
13 chapters 61 and 88, F.S.; specifying the public policy
14 of this state in applying the choice of a foreign law,
15 legal code, or system under certain circumstances in
16 proceedings brought under or relating to chapters 61
17 and 88, F.S., which relate to dissolution of marriage,
18 support, time-sharing, the Uniform Child Custody
19 Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act, and the Uniform
20 Interstate Family Support Act; declaring that certain
21 decisions rendered under such laws, codes, or systems
22 are void; declaring that certain choice of venue or
23 forum provisions in a contract are void; providing for
24 the construction of a waiver by a natural person of
25 the person's fundamental liberties, rights, and
26 privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or the
27 United States Constitution; declaring that claims of
28 forum non conveniens or related claims must be denied

29 | under certain circumstances; providing that the act
 30 | may not be construed to require or authorize any court
 31 | to adjudicate, or prohibit any religious organization
 32 | from adjudicating, ecclesiastical matters in violation
 33 | of specified constitutional provisions or to conflict
 34 | with any federal treaty or other international
 35 | agreement to which the United States is a party to a
 36 | specified extent; providing for severability;
 37 | providing an effective date.

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39 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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41 | Section 1. Section 45.022, Florida Statutes, is created to
 42 | read:

43 | 45.022 Application of foreign law contrary to public
 44 | policy in certain cases.-

45 | (1) While the Legislature fully recognizes the right to
 46 | contract freely under the laws of this state, it also recognizes
 47 | that this right may be reasonably and rationally circumscribed
 48 | pursuant to the state's interest to protect and promote
 49 | liberties, rights, and privileges granted under the State
 50 | Constitution or the United States Constitution.

51 | (2) As used in this section, the term "foreign law, legal
 52 | code, or system" means any law, legal code, or system of a
 53 | foreign country, state, or nation, or subdivision thereof,
 54 | outside of the United States or its territories, including, but
 55 | not limited to, a foreign or international organization claiming
 56 | status as a country, state, or nation or asserting legal

57 authority to act on behalf of one or more foreign countries,
58 states, or nations, and any other similar international
59 organization or tribunal, and applied by that jurisdiction's
60 courts, administrative bodies, or other formal or informal
61 tribunals. The term does not include the common law and statute
62 laws of England as described in s. 2.01 or any laws of the
63 Native American tribes in this state.

64 (3) (a) This section applies only to actual or foreseeable
65 denials of a natural person's fundamental liberties, rights, and
66 privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or the United
67 States Constitution from the application of a foreign law, legal
68 code, or system in proceedings brought under, pursuant to, or
69 pertaining to the subject matter of chapter 61 or chapter 88.

70 (b) Except as necessary to provide effective relief in
71 proceedings brought under, pursuant to, or pertaining to the
72 subject matter of chapter 61 or chapter 88, this section does
73 not apply to a corporation, partnership, or other form of
74 business association.

75 (4) Any court, arbitration, tribunal, or administrative
76 agency ruling or decision violates the public policy of this
77 state and is void and unenforceable if the court, arbitration,
78 tribunal, or administrative agency bases its ruling or decision
79 in the matter at issue in whole or in part on any foreign law,
80 legal code, or system that does not grant the parties affected
81 by the ruling or decision the same fundamental liberties,
82 rights, and privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or
83 the United States Constitution.

84 (5) (a) A contract or contractual provision, if severable,

85 that provides for the choice of a foreign law, legal code, or
86 system to govern some or all of the disputes between the parties
87 to be adjudicated by a court of law or by an arbitration panel
88 arising from the contract violates the public policy of this
89 state and is void and unenforceable if the foreign law, legal
90 code, or system chosen includes or incorporates any substantive
91 or procedural law, as applied to the dispute at issue, which
92 would not grant the parties the same fundamental liberties,
93 rights, and privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or
94 the United States Constitution.

95 (b) This subsection does not limit the right of a natural
96 person in this state to voluntarily restrict or limit his or her
97 fundamental liberties, rights, and privileges guaranteed by the
98 State Constitution or the United States Constitution by contract
99 or specific waiver consistent with constitutional principles,
100 but the language of any such contract or other waiver must be
101 strictly construed in favor of preserving such liberties,
102 rights, and privileges.

103 (6) (a) A contract or contractual provision, if severable,
104 that provides for the choice of venue or choice of forum outside
105 a state or territory of the United States violates the public
106 policy of this state and is void and unenforceable if the
107 enforcement of the choice of venue or forum provision would
108 result in a violation of any fundamental liberties, rights, and
109 privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or the United
110 States Constitution.

111 (b) If a natural person who is subject to personal
112 jurisdiction in this state seeks to maintain litigation,

113 arbitration, agency, or similarly binding proceedings in this
114 state and the courts of this state find that granting a claim of
115 forum non conveniens or a related claim denies or would likely
116 lead to the denial of any fundamental liberties, rights, and
117 privileges guaranteed by the State Constitution or the United
118 States Constitution of the nonclaimant in the foreign forum with
119 respect to the matter in dispute, it is the public policy of
120 this state that the claim be denied.

121 (7) This section may not be construed to:

122 (a) Require or authorize any court to adjudicate, or
123 prohibit any religious organization from adjudicating,
124 ecclesiastical matters, including, but not limited to, the
125 election, appointment, calling, discipline, dismissal, removal,
126 or excommunication of a member, officer, official, priest, nun,
127 monk, pastor, rabbi, imam, or member of the clergy of the
128 religious organization, or determination or interpretation of
129 the doctrine of the religious organization, if such adjudication
130 or prohibition would violate s. 3, Art. I of the State
131 Constitution or the First Amendment to the United States
132 Constitution; or

133 (b) Conflict with any federal treaty or other
134 international agreement to which the United States is a party to
135 the extent that such federal treaty or international agreement
136 preempts or is superior to state law on the matter at issue.

137 (8) If any provision of this section or its application to
138 any natural person or circumstance is held invalid, the
139 invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of
140 this section which can be given effect, and to that end the

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141 | provisions of this section are severable.

142 | Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.