

Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

CS/CS/SB 708 — Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys

by Appropriations Committee; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; and Senators Joyner and Smith

This bill authorizes the Department of State (DOS) to reimburse the next of kin or pay the provider or funeral home up to \$7,500 for funeral, reinterment, and grave marker expenses for each child's remains recovered from the Arthur G. Dozier (Dozier) School for Boys by the University of South Florida (USF). The historical resources and artifacts recovered from Dozier are to remain in the custody of the USF pending release to the DOS, and any recovered human remains are to be held by the USF pending release to the next of kin or reinterment.

The bill requires the DOS to contract with the USF for identification and location of next of kin. The DOS will notify the next of kin and make arrangements for the payment or reimbursement of eligible expenses.

The bill establishes a nine-member task force to make recommendations to the DOS about creating and maintaining a memorial and the location of a site for the reinterment of unidentified or unclaimed remains. The task force recommendations must be submitted to the Governor and Cabinet, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House or Representatives, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives by October 1, 2016. The bill also provides for the repeal of the task force on December 31, 2016.

The bill also requires the DOS to submit a report by February 1, 2018, to the Governor and Cabinet, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on payments and expenditures required by the bill.

For Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the bill appropriates \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the DOS to implement the provisions of the bill. Any unused funds will revert to the General Revenue Fund and are appropriated for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 for the same purpose.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 114-3

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