

Tab 1	CS/SB 742 by ED, Simon; Identical to CS/H 01145 Workforce Education
Tab 2	SB 892 by Simon; Similar to H 01055 Florida State University Election Law Center

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Harrell, Chair
Senator Bradley, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

TIME: 12:30—4:00 p.m.

PLACE: Toni Jennings Committee Room, 110 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Harrell, Chair; Senator Bradley, Vice Chair; Senators Burgess, Calatayud, Davis, Leek, Smith, and Trumbull

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	CS/SB 742 Education Pre-K - 12 / Simon (Identical CS/H 1145, Compare CS/S 140)	Workforce Education; Providing that charter schools are eligible for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program; revising the number of programs school districts and Florida College System institutions must offer money-back guarantees for through the money-back guarantee program by a specified date; requiring school districts and Florida College System institutions to report such programs to the State Board of Education, etc.	
		ED 03/25/2025 Not Considered ED 03/31/2025 Fav/CS AHE 04/15/2025 FP	
2	SB 892 Simon (Similar H 1055)	Florida State University Election Law Center; Creating the center within the Florida State University College of Law; defining the term "election law"; authorizing the center to provide assistance to the Legislature and other governmental entities; providing mechanisms for the funding of the center, etc.	
		HE 03/17/2025 Favorable AHE 04/15/2025 FP	

TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING	COMMITTEE ACTION
Senate Confirmation Hearing: A public hearing will be held for consideration of the below-named executive appointments to the offices indicated.			
Board of Trustees of Pensacola State College			
3	Rudman, Joel (Navarre)	05/31/2027	
Board of Trustees, University of North Florida			
4	Davis, Jill Smith ()	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, University of South Florida			
5	Barakat, Charbel J. (Tampa)	01/06/2028	
Board of Trustees, New College of Florida			
6	Jacquot, Joe (Jacksonville)	01/06/2030	
7	Kesler, Charles R. (Pasadena)	01/06/2030	

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDAAppropriations Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 12:30—4:00 p.m.

TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING	COMMITTEE ACTION
8	Mackie, Sarah S. (Palmetto)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees of Daytona State College			
9	Dye, Randall W. (Deland)	05/31/2027	
10	Lupoli, Nellie (Ormond Beach)	05/31/2025	
11	Lloyd, Robert W. (Daytona Beach)	05/31/2027	
12	Freckleton, Lloyd J. (Flagler Beach)	05/31/2027	
Board of Trustees of St. Johns River State College			
13	Stewart, Tammy Chereese ()	05/31/2026	
14	Sapp, W.J., Jr. (Orange Park)	05/31/2026	
Board of Trustees of Santa Fe College			
15	Ezzell, Tara (Gainesville)	05/31/2027	
Board of Trustees of Tallahassee State College			
16	Brown, Monesia (Tallahassee)	05/31/2025	
Board of Trustees of Valencia College			
17	Davis, John F. (Tallahassee)	05/31/2026	
Board of Trustees, Florida Atlantic University			
18	Harrison, Jon ()	01/06/2030	
19	Vidal-Duart, Tina (Tallahassee)	01/06/2030	
20	Murphy, Sherry (Jupiter)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, Florida Gulf Coast University			
21	Antonucci, Lawrence R. (Fort Myers)	01/06/2030	
22	Roepstorff, Robbie B. (Fort Myers)	01/06/2030	
Board of Trustees, Florida Atlantic University			
23	McCleneghen, Joseph Scott (Boca Raton)	01/06/2026	
Board of Trustees of Palm Beach State College			
24	Barnett, Michael A. (Greenacres)	05/31/2026	

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
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Other Related Meeting Documents

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

BILL: CS/SB 742

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Simon

SUBJECT: Workforce Education

DATE: April 14, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	Fav/CS
2.	<u>Gray</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AHE</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>FP</u>	<u> </u>

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 742 allows charter schools to directly access funding through the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program. This funding may be used to cover some or all costs associated with the creation or expansion of career and technical education programs that lead to industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.

Additionally, the bill increases from three to six the number of programs for which each career center and Florida College System institution must offer a money-back guarantee.

The bill may have an indeterminate negative fiscal impact on local governments. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

II. Present Situation:

Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program

The Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program (CAP Grant) provides grants to school districts and Florida College System (FCS) institutions to support the creation or expansion of career and technical education programs leading to industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List. These programs may serve secondary students

or postsecondary students, provided the postsecondary career and technical education program also serves secondary students.¹

Grant funds may be used for instructional equipment, laboratory equipment, supplies, personnel, student services, or other expenses related to the establishment or expansion of career and technical education programs serving secondary students. Expansion may include increasing program enrollment or adding new areas of specialization. However, grant funds may not be used for recurring instructional costs or institutions' indirect costs.²

The Department of Education (DOE) administers the program, and the State Board of Education is authorized to adopt rules for its administration. When ranking applications, the State Board of Education must consider the statewide geographic dispersion of grant funds and prioritize applications from education agencies that maximize workforce development funding by offering high-performing, high-demand programs.³

In both 2023⁴ and 2024,⁵ the Legislature provided \$100 million for the CAP Grant.

Money-back Guarantee Program

The Money-back Guarantee Program aims to help individuals achieve self-sufficiency by requiring each school district and FCS institution to refund tuition costs for students who fail to secure employment in their trained field within six months of successfully completing an eligible workforce education program. These programs must prepare students for in-demand, middle- to high-wage occupations.⁶

Each school district and FCS institution must offer a money-back guarantee for at least three programs and establish student eligibility criteria, which may include:

- Student attendance.
- Program performance.
- Career Service or Career Day attendance.
- Internship or work-study participation.
- Job search documentation.
- Development of a career plan with the institution's career services department.⁷

The DOE is required to submit an annual report on the Money-back Guarantee Program. By November 1 of each year, the DOE must report performance results for each participating school district, FCS institution, and program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.⁸

¹ Section 1011.801, F.S.

² Section 1011.801(1), F.S.

³ Section 1011.801(2), F.S.

⁴ Section 51, ch. 2023-81, L.O.F.

⁵ Specific Appropriation 120, s. 2, ch. 2024-231, L.O.F.

⁶ Section 1011.803(1), F.S.

⁷ Section 1011.803(2), F.S.

⁸ Section 1011.803(4), F.S.

Five school districts do not meet the three-program requirement because they only operate two qualifying programs under the Money-back Guarantee Program.⁹ A total of 3,872 students have enrolled in an eligible program, including 790 students at FCS institutions and 3,082 students at school districts. To date, no students have requested refunds for any program.¹⁰

Work Search Requirements under Reemployment Assistance Law

To receive reemployment assistance benefits, an individual must be able to work and available for work during each week of claimed unemployment. To be considered “available for work,” a claimant must be actively seeking employment, which is defined as engaging in systematic and sustained efforts to find work, including contacting at least five prospective employers each week.

Alternatively, a claimant may satisfy this requirement by reporting in person to a one-stop career center to meet with a center representative and access reemployment services. The center must maintain records of the services provided and make them available to the department upon request.

The law further provides that a claimant’s job search documentation may not include the same prospective employer at the same location for three consecutive weeks, unless the employer has indicated that it is hiring again since the initial contact.

For claimants residing in small counties, as defined in Section 120.52(19), Florida Statutes, the minimum number of required employer contacts is reduced to three per week. Union members may satisfy the work search requirement by reporting daily to their union hiring hall, if that is their customary method of seeking work.¹¹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill amends s. 1011.801, F.S., to allow charter schools to directly access funding through the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program. This funding may be used to cover costs associated with the creation or expansion of career and technical education programs that lead to industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.

The bill also amends s. 1011.803, F.S., relating to the Money-back Guarantee Program, to:

- Require each school district and Florida College System (FCS) institution to increase the number of programs for which a money-back guarantee is offered from three to six by July 1, 2026, and to notify the State Board of Education of the additional programs.
- Clarify that enrollment in a qualifying program constitutes enrollment in the money-back guarantee program.
- Provide that eligibility criteria related to job search documentation and internship or work-study participation may not exceed the work search requirements under Reemployment Assistance Law.

⁹ [School District: MBG Program Offerings](#) (last visited April 8, 2025).

¹⁰ Florida Department of Education, *2024 Money Back Guarantee Program Report* (November 2024), at 4.

¹¹ Section 443.091(1), F.S.

The bill also expands the Department of Education's annual reporting requirement to include the eligibility criteria for tuition reimbursement by school district, FCS institution, and program, in addition to performance results.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

While the bill does not require an appropriation of state funds, requiring additional programs under the Money-back Guarantee Program may result in increased costs for school districts and FCS institutions if they have to start a new program to meet the requirement or if students in the additional programs are unable to find jobs within six months of program completion.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1011.801 and 1011.803.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Education Pre-K - 12 on March 31, 2025:

The committee substitute:

- Includes a conforming change to clarify charter school eligibility provided in the bill for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program.
- Replaces the bill's immediate increase from three to six required programs with a phased approach, requiring an additional three programs to be added by July 1, 2026, bringing the total to six programs at that time and:
 - Requires notification to the State Board of Education of the three additional programs.
 - Specifies that enrollment in a qualifying program constitutes enrollment in the money-back guarantee program.
- Caps eligibility criteria for job search documentation and internship/work-study participation by requiring they not exceed the work search requirements in s. 443.091, F.S. (which governs reemployment assistance).
- Expands the Department of Education's existing annual report (due Nov. 1) to include not just performance results, but also the eligibility criteria for tuition reimbursement by school district, FCS institution, and program.
- Includes a title change to an act related to "workforce education."

B. Amendments:

None.

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Simon

581-03084-25

2025742c1

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to workforce education; amending s. 1011.801, F.S.; providing that charter schools are eligible for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program; amending s. 1011.803, F.S.; revising the number of programs school districts and Florida College System institutions must offer money-back guarantees for through the money-back guarantee program by a specified date; requiring school districts and Florida College System institutions to report such programs to the State Board of Education; providing requirements for specified student eligibility criteria for tuition reimbursement under the program; revising reporting requirements; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 1011.801, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1011.801 Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program.—The Legislature recognizes that the need for school districts, charter schools, and Florida College System institutions to be able to respond to emerging local or statewide economic development needs is critical to the workforce development system. The Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program is created to provide grants to school districts, charter schools, and Florida College System institutions to fund some or all of the costs associated

Page 1 of 3

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with the creation or expansion of career and technical education programs that lead to industry certifications included on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List. The programs may serve secondary students or postsecondary students if the postsecondary career and technical education program also serves secondary students.

(1) Funds awarded for a workforce development capitalization incentive grant may be used for instructional equipment, laboratory equipment, supplies, personnel, student services, or other expenses associated with the creation or expansion of a career and technical education program that serves secondary students. Expansion of a program may include either the expansion of enrollments in a program or expansion into new areas of specialization within a program. No grant funds may be used for recurring instructional costs or for institutions' indirect costs.

(2) The Department of Education shall administer the program. The State Board of Education may adopt rules for program administration. The State Board of Education shall consider the statewide geographic dispersion of grant funds in ranking the applications and shall give priority to applications from education agencies that are making maximum use of their workforce development funding by offering high-performing, high-demand programs.

Section 2. Subsections (2) and (4) of section 1011.803, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1011.803 Money-back Guarantee Program.—

(2) Each school district and Florida College System institution shall establish a money-back guarantee program to:

Page 2 of 3

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(a) Offer a money-back guarantee on at least three programs. However, by July 1, 2026, each school district and Florida College System institution must offer a money-back guarantee on at least three additional programs and notify the State Board of Education of such programs.

(b) Establish student eligibility criteria for the reimbursement of tuition under the money-back guarantee program that includes:

1. Student attendance.
2. Student program performance.
3. Career Service or Career Day attendance.
4. Participation in internship or work-study programs.
5. Job search documentation.
6. Development of a student career plan with the institution's career services department.

Enrollment in a program established pursuant to this subsection constitutes enrollment in the money-back guarantee program. Eligibility criteria for the reimbursement of tuition established by the school district or Florida College System institution pursuant to subparagraphs 4. and 5. may not exceed the work search requirements under s. 443.091.

(4) By November 1 of each year, the Department of Education shall report performance results and eligibility criteria for the reimbursement of tuition by school district, Florida College System institution, and program to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Higher Education

BILL: SB 892

INTRODUCER: Senator Simon

SUBJECT: Florida State University Election Law Center

DATE: April 14, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>HE</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Gray</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AHE</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u>FP</u>	<u> </u>

I. Summary:

SB 892 creates the Florida State University Election Law Center within the Florida State University College of Law to conduct nonpartisan research, provide training, and serve as a resource on election law issues. The center will study topics including:

- Voting rights, redistricting, and campaign finance.
- Election administration, election disputes, and related issues.
- Election integrity and best practices for electoral systems.

The bill authorizes the center to:

- Hire faculty, develop courses, and host events.
- Assist government entities with election law matters.
- Offer student scholarships and fellowships.

The bill provides that the center will be funded through appropriations as provided in the General Appropriations Act, charitable donations and grants, and other university funds.

This bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on state revenues and expenditures. **See Section V. Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

II. Present Situation:

Election Law

Election law covers a wide array of topics, including political spending, voting rights, ballot propositions, redistricting, gerrymandering, and campaign finance. Useful secondary materials include legal resources as well as interdisciplinary sources in the areas of political science,

history, and public policy.¹ Federal statutes, such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, regulate key aspects of election law, while state laws dictate voter eligibility, ballot access, and election procedures.²

At the state level, elections are primarily governed by Chapters 97 through 106, Florida Statutes, which address voter registration, election administration, campaign finance, and recount procedures.³ The Florida Division of Elections, under the Department of State, provides guidance and oversight for elections, while county supervisors of elections administer elections locally.⁴ Legal challenges related to election law arise in state and federal courts, particularly concerning issues of voter access, redistricting, and campaign finance regulations.⁵

Florida State University College of Law

Florida State University (FSU) College of Law, located in Tallahassee, Florida, is a nationally recognized public law school. The college offers a range of legal education programs, including specialized courses in constitutional law, administrative law, and public policy, leveraging its proximity to the Florida Capitol to provide students with access to state government institutions and legal practitioners.⁶

Florida State University Election Law Center

The FSU Election Law Center, housed within the FSU College of Law, provides nonpartisan research, training, and policy analysis on election law. The center collaborates with election officials, legislators, and scholars to improve election administration, voting rights, and election integrity. It also offers student scholarships, externships, and research fellowships to support careers in election law.⁷

The center is led by a Faculty Director and an Executive Director, who oversee its academic, research, and outreach initiatives.⁸ The center hosts conferences, lectures, and training sessions, including the Election Law Conference and the Distinguished Lecture in Election Law.⁹

¹ University of California, Irvine School of Law, *Election Law Research Guide*, available at <https://libguides.law.uci.edu/election> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

² 52 U.S.C. ss. 10301–10508 (Voting Rights Act of 1965); 52 U.S.C. ss. 20501–20511 (National Voter Registration Act of 1993).

³ See generally Chapters 97–106, F.S.

⁴ See Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, *About Us*, <https://dos.fl.gov/elections/about-us/> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

⁵ See, e.g., *League of Women Voters of Fla. v. Lee*, 595 F. Supp. 3d 1042 (N.D. Fla. 2022) (addressing Florida’s voting restrictions and their impact on minority voters).

⁶ Florida State University College of Law, *College of Law*, <https://law.fsu.edu/> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

⁷ Florida State University College of Law, *Election Law Center*, <https://law.fsu.edu/academics/election-law-center> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

⁸ Florida State University College of Law, *Election Law Center Welcomes Executive Director*, <https://law.fsu.edu/press-release/election-law-center-welcomes-executive-director> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

⁹ Florida State University College of Law, *2024 Distinguished Lecture in Election Law*, <https://law.fsu.edu/2024-distinguished-lecture-election-law> (last visited Mar. 22, 2025).

Intellectual Freedom and Viewpoint Diversity

"Intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity" is the exposure of students, faculty, and staff to, and the encouragement of their exploration of, a variety of ideological and political perspectives. State universities are prohibited from shielding students, faculty, or staff from ideas or opinions they may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive.

The Board of Governors of the State University System is required to conduct an annual assessment of intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity at each state university, using an objective, nonpartisan, and statistically valid survey. This survey measures the extent to which competing ideas and perspectives are presented and whether members of the university community feel free to express their beliefs and viewpoints.¹⁰

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill establishes the Florida State University (FSU) Election Law Center within the FSU College of Law. The bill creates s. 1004.421, F.S., to codify the center's establishment and define its purpose and scope.

Election Law

The bill defines "election law" broadly to include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

- Voting rights.
- Election administration.
- Election emergencies.
- Election integrity.
- Voter registration and voter registration databases.
- Cyber or other technical issues relating to elections.
- Federal, state, and local legal provisions governing the electoral process.
- Election contests for any federal, state, or local office.
- Matters relating to the Electoral College or the casting, counting, or validity of electoral votes.
- Federal and state campaign finance law.
- Election audits.
- Apportionment and redistricting.
- Doctrines relating to justiciability, civil procedure, and remedies in election-related cases.

Additionally, the bill extends the definition of election law to historical, empirical, and comparative studies of the specified topics, as well as philosophical and theoretical discussions on democracy, democratic theory, and republicanism.

¹⁰ Section 1001.706(13), F.S.

Goals of the Florida State University Election Law Center

The bill establishes the goals of the FSU Election Law Center, directing it to advance scholarship, education, and public confidence in election law. The bill specifically provides that the goals of the center are to:

- Conduct and promote rigorous, objective, nonpartisan, and evidence-based research on significant constitutional, statutory, and regulatory issues related to election law.
- Plan and host events to facilitate learning about the electoral process and election law, providing opportunities for students, scholars, legislators, judges, election administrators, attorneys, and members of the public to engage in discussions.
- Develop and sponsor publicly accessible materials and resources that educate the public on elections and election law, ensuring transparency and accessibility.
- Assist students by providing learning opportunities, practical experience, and career pathways in election law.
- Enhance the reputation of the FSU College of Law as a nationally recognized center for cutting-edge legal scholarship and technical expertise in election law.
- Serve as a nonpartisan resource to address election law inquiries from federal, state, and local election officials, the Legislature, and legislative staff. The center supports understanding of the electoral process and promotes public confidence in Florida's electoral system.
- Develop objective, evidence-based analysis, best practices, and potential reforms to election statutes, regulations, and policies to:
 - Strengthen electoral systems to effectively manage natural disasters and other emergencies that could disrupt elections.
 - Promote public confidence in the electoral process by promoting transparency and integrity.
 - Ensure that all qualified United States citizens in Florida have a reasonable, adequate, and safe opportunity to exercise their right to vote.
 - Minimize the risks of mistakes, fraud, violations, accidents, or other irregularities that could affect elections.

Authorized Activities of the Center

The bill authorizes the FSU Election Law Center to undertake a range of activities to fulfill its mission of advancing election law research, education, and policy development. The bill authorizes the center to:

- Hire necessary faculty and staff to support the center's operations and develop and teach courses related to election law.
- Organize and host events such as workshops, symposia, roundtables, interviews, public discussions, lectures, and conferences.
- Conduct, aid, and sponsor research on election law and publish or make publicly available articles, reports, analyses, databases, or websites to disseminate election law scholarship and policy insights.
- Provide training and continuing education for members of the federal and state judiciaries and judicial organizations, attorneys, Department of State personnel, supervisors of elections and their employees, and other election administrators.

- Offer formal and informal assistance to the Legislature and governmental entities or officials at the federal, state, and county levels on matters related to elections and election law. This assistance may include research, reports, public comments, testimony, or briefs.
- Award scholarships and research assistantships to outstanding students interested in election law and sponsors fellowships to fund qualified students to work with the center or at local, state, or federal offices and nonpartisan entities engaged in election law matters.
- Form partnerships with other centers, programs, institutes, and associations as appropriate to promote the center's goals.

Data Sharing and Confidentiality Requirements

The bill authorizes the Department of State, supervisors of elections, the State Library, and the State Archives to cooperate with the FSU Election Law Center by sharing electronic copies of information or data in their possession, custody, or control upon request of the center's faculty director.

The bill requires the center and its employees to be subject to, and to store such information or data consistent with, confidentiality and security requirements that are comparable to those that apply to the Department of State, supervisors of elections, and their employees.

Funding for the Center

The bill provides that the center will be funded through appropriations as provided in the General Appropriations Act, charitable donations and grants, and other university funds.

Leadership and Governance

The bill requires the dean of the FSU College of Law to appoint a faculty director to lead the center who is a tenured member of the faculty of the law school. The bill requires the faculty director to hire an executive director to conduct the center's day-to-day operations.

The bill requires the faculty director, in consultation with the executive director, to:

- Establish programs that promote the center's goals.
- Develop the budget and disburse the funds appropriated, donated, or provided to the center.
- Hire employees for the center.
- Oversee the center's research, education, and training programs, events, and work product.

Academic Freedom and Intellectual Diversity Protections

The bill requires the center's research, work, activities, filings, speakers, events, and operations be subject to academic freedom protections. The bill prohibits the center or any of its full-time faculty or staff from being compelled to conduct, consult on, or otherwise assist any research or initiatives by any outside federal, state, or local official or agency or private person or entity. The bill further requires the center to promote intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity, which is the exposure of students, faculty, and staff to, and the encouragement of their exploration of, a variety of ideological and political perspectives.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Florida State University Election Law Center may incur costs to implement the bill's requirements. Without being specific, the bill provides that the center will be funded through appropriations in the General Appropriations Act, charitable donations and grants, and other university funds.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 1004.421 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Simon

3-01557-25

2025892

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Florida State University
 3 Election Law Center; creating s. 1004.421, F.S.;
 4 creating the center within the Florida State
 5 University College of Law; defining the term "election
 6 law"; providing the goals of the center; authorizing
 7 the center to hire staff and develop courses;
 8 authorizing the center to hold events and conduct,
 9 aid, and sponsor specified research; authorizing the
 10 center to provide training and continuing education;
 11 authorizing the center to provide assistance to the
 12 Legislature and other governmental entities;
 13 authorizing the center to provide scholarships and
 14 assistantships and to partner with specified entities;
 15 authorizing specified entities to cooperate with the
 16 center and share specified information; providing
 17 mechanisms for the funding of the center; requiring
 18 the dean of the college of law to appoint a faculty
 19 director; providing the duties of the faculty and
 20 executive directors; providing an effective date.
 21
 22 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
 23
 24 Section 1. Section 1004.421, Florida Statutes, is created
 25 to read:
 26 1004.421 Election Law Center at the Florida State
 27 University.—The Florida State University Election Law Center is
 28 hereby created at the Florida State University College of Law.
 29 (1)(a) For purposes of this section, the term "election

Page 1 of 6

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

3-01557-25

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30 law" shall be construed broadly to include, but not be limited
 31 to, issues related to:
 32 1. Voting rights.
 33 2. Election administration.
 34 3. Election emergencies.
 35 4. Election integrity.
 36 5. Voter registration and voter registration databases.
 37 6. Cyber or other technical issues relating to elections.
 38 7. Federal, state, and local legal provisions governing the
 39 electoral process.
 40 8. Election contests for any federal, state, or local
 41 office.
 42 9. Matters relating to the Electoral College or the
 43 casting, counting, or validity of electoral votes.
 44 10. Federal and state campaign finance law.
 45 11. Election audits.
 46 12. Apportionment and redistricting.
 47 13. Doctrines relating to justiciability, civil procedure,
 48 and remedies which may arise in election-related cases.
 49 (b) Election law includes the historical, empirical, and
 50 comparative aspects of the topics specified in paragraph (a), as
 51 well as philosophical and theoretical issues relating to
 52 democracy, democratic theory, and republicanism more broadly.
 53 (2) The goals of the center are to:
 54 (a) Conduct and promote rigorous, objective, nonpartisan,
 55 evidence-based research concerning important constitutional,
 56 statutory, and regulatory issues relating to election law.
 57 (b) Plan and host events to allow students, scholars,
 58 legislators, judges, election administrators, attorneys, and

Page 2 of 6

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3-01557-25

2025892

members of the public to learn about the electoral process and election law.

(c) Develop and sponsor publicly accessible materials and resources concerning elections and election law.

(d) Assist students in learning about, gaining practical experience with, and pursuing career opportunities relating to election law.

(e) Enhance the Florida State University College of Law's reputation as a nationally respected source for cutting-edge legal scholarship and technical legal expertise.

(f) Serve as a credible, objective, nonpartisan resource to address election law inquiries from federal, state, and local election officials and the Legislature and legislative staff; bolster understanding of the electoral process; and promote public confidence in Florida's electoral system.

(g) Develop objective, evidence-based analysis, best practices, and potential reforms to statutes, regulations, and other policies governing elections to:

1. Enable electoral systems to deal more effectively with natural disasters and other emergencies that can impede or undermine an election;

2. Bolster public confidence in the electoral process;

3. Ensure that United States citizens who meet this state's voter qualification requirements have a reasonable, adequate, and safe opportunity to exercise their right to vote; and

4. Minimize the possibility of mistake, fraud, violations, accidents, or other irregularities impacting elections.

(3) The center may do all of the following:

(a) Hire necessary faculty and staff and develop and teach

3-01557-25

2025892

courses relating to election law.

(b) Hold events, including workshops, symposia, roundtables, interviews, public discussions, lectures, and conferences.

(c) Conduct, aid, and sponsor research relating to election law, to publish or otherwise make publicly available articles, reports, analyses, databases, or websites relating to election law issues.

(d) Provide training and continuing education for the federal and state judiciaries and judicial organizations, attorneys, Department of State personnel, supervisors of elections and their employees, and other election administrators.

(e) Provide formal or informal assistance to the Legislature, as well as to governmental entities or officials at the federal, state, or county levels, concerning elections or election law, including, but not limited to, research, reports, public comments, testimony, or briefs.

(f) Provide scholarships and research assistantships to outstanding students interested in election law and sponsor fellowships to pay for qualified students to work with the center or at any local, state, or federal office or nonpartisan entity that deals with election law.

(g) Partner with other centers, programs, institutes, and associations, as appropriate, to promote the center's goals.

(4) The Department of State, supervisors of elections, the State Library, and the State Archives may cooperate and share with the center electronic copies of information or data in their possession, custody, or control upon request of the

3-01557-25 2025892__

117 center's faculty director to further the goals of the center,
 118 provided that the center and its employees are subject to, and
 119 store such information or data consistent with, confidentiality
 120 and security requirements comparable to those that apply to the
 121 department, supervisors of elections, and their employees.

122 (5) The center shall be funded through appropriations as
 123 provided in the General Appropriations Act, charitable donations
 124 and grants, and other university funds.

125 (6) The dean of the Florida State University College of Law
 126 shall appoint a faculty director to lead the center. The faculty
 127 director must be a tenured member of the faculty of the law
 128 school. The faculty director shall hire an executive director to
 129 conduct the center's day-to-day operations. The faculty
 130 director, in consultation with the executive director, shall do
 131 all of the following:

132 (a) Establish programs that promote the center's goals.

133 (b) Develop the budget and disburse the funds appropriated,
 134 donated, or provided to the center.

135 (c) Hire employees for the center.

136 (d) Oversee the center's research, education, and training
 137 programs, events, and work product.

138 (7) The center's research, work, activities, filings,
 139 speakers, events, and operations shall be subject to academic
 140 freedom protections. The center or any of its full-time faculty
 141 or staff may not be compelled to conduct, consult on, or
 142 otherwise assist any research or initiatives by any outside
 143 federal, state, or local official or agency or private person or
 144 entity. The center shall seek to promote intellectual freedom
 145 and viewpoint diversity as defined in s. 1001.706(13)(a)1.

Page 5 of 6

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3-01557-25 2025892__

146 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

Page 6 of 6

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