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DATE: March 26, 1997

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
BILL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT - LOCAL LEGISLATION**

BILL #: HB 1365

RELATING TO: St. Lucie County Fire District

SPONSOR(S): Representative K. Pruitt

COMPANION BILL(S): None

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

(1) COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

I. SUMMARY:

This bill removes the duties and responsibilities of personnel officer from the clerk-treasurer of the St. Lucie County Fire District (District).

The Economic Impact Statement indicates this bill has no fiscal impact on the District's funds.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

In 1953, the predecessor to the St. Lucie County-Fort Pierce Fire Prevention and Control District (District) was created by chapter 29503, Laws of Florida, 1953. The District was renamed and reestablished in 1955, and was again reestablished in 1959, by chapter 59-1806, Laws of Florida.

The 1996 Legislature abolished the St. Lucie County-Fort Pierce Fire Prevention and Control District (chapter 96-532, Laws of Florida), and reestablished it as the St. Lucie County Fire District. The reenactment provided that the clerk-treasurer of the district serve as the financial officer *and* the personnel officer.

The District, an independent special district, serves an area of approximately 700 square miles, which includes the municipalities of Port St. Lucie and Ft. Pierce, as well as unincorporated areas of St. Lucie County. The District serves a population of approximately 185,000, employs 300 fulltime employees and performed approximately 20,000 calls in 1996.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

This bill removes the duties and responsibilities of personnel officer from the clerk-treasurer (financial officer) of the District.

C. LAWS OF FLORIDA/FLORIDA STATUTES AFFECTED:

Amends chapter 96-532, Laws of Florida.

D. APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES:

1. Less Government:

Not applicable.

a. Does the bill create, increase or reduce, either directly or indirectly:

(1) any authority to make rules or adjudicate disputes?

(2) any new responsibilities, obligations or work for other governmental or private organizations or individuals?

(3) any entitlement to a government service or benefit?

b. If an agency or program is eliminated or reduced:

(1) what responsibilities, costs and powers are passed on to another program, agency, level of government, or private entity?

(2) what is the cost of such responsibility at the new level/agency?

(3) how is the new agency accountable to the people governed?

2. Lower Taxes:

Not applicable.

a. Does the bill increase anyone's taxes?

b. Does the bill require or authorize an increase in any fees?

c. Does the bill reduce total taxes, both rates and revenues?

d. Does the bill reduce total fees, both rates and revenues?

e. Does the bill authorize any fee or tax increase by any local government?

3. Personal Responsibility:

Not applicable.

a. Does the bill reduce or eliminate an entitlement to government services or subsidy?

b. Do the beneficiaries of the legislation directly pay any portion of the cost of implementation and operation?

4. Individual Freedom:

Not applicable.

- a. Does the bill increase the allowable options of individuals or private organizations/associations to conduct their own affairs?
- b. Does the bill prohibit, or create new government interference with, any presently lawful activity?

5. Family Empowerment:

Not applicable.

- a. If the bill purports to provide services to families or children:

- (1) Who evaluates the family's needs?

- (2) Who makes the decisions?

- (3) Are private alternatives permitted?

- (4) Are families required to participate in a program?

- (5) Are families penalized for not participating in a program?

- b. Does the bill directly affect the legal rights and obligations between family members?

- c. If the bill creates or changes a program providing services to families or children, in which of the following does the bill vest control of the program, either through direct participation or appointment authority:

- (1) parents and guardians?

- (2) service providers?

- (3) government employees/agencies?

E. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Section 1-- Amends Section 16 of chapter 96-532, Laws of Florida, to remove the duties of personnel officer from the clerk-treasurer (financial officer) of the District.

Section 2-- Provides for an effective date of upon becoming a law.

III. NOTICE/REFERENDUM AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

A. NOTICE PUBLISHED? Yes No

IF YES, WHEN? December 6, 1996

WHERE? The Tribune, Ft. Pierce, St. Lucie County, FL

B. REFERENDUM(S) REQUIRED? Yes No

IF YES, WHEN?

C. LOCAL BILL CERTIFICATION FILED? Yes, attached No

D. ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT FILED? Yes, attached No

IV. COMMENTS:

The Board of Supervisors approved this change to the special act in the fall of 1996. Since then the membership of the Board has changed slightly. The Board did not indicate at the time they voted to approve the change to whom the duties and responsibilities of personnel officer should be assigned. The fire chief of the District commented that it is probable the majority of those duties will continue to be carried out by the financial officer with the chief's assistance.

V. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

None.

VI. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS:

Prepared by:

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