

By Representative Rodriguez-Chomat

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; creating a pilot  
3           program to increase the number of school  
4           counselors; establishing a ratio of counselors  
5           to students; requiring an evaluation; providing  
6           an appropriation; providing an effective date.

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

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10           Section 1. There is hereby created a 3-year pilot  
11 program in Dade, Orange, and Leon Counties to provide  
12 additional counselors in the public schools. In order to  
13 advise students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes,  
14 to assist students in the selection of credit courses required  
15 for high school graduation, and to provide guidance regarding  
16 educational and career options after high school, 200  
17 additional counselors shall be hired to achieve, at a minimum,  
18 the following ratios:

19                   (1) For elementary schools:

20                   (a) One counselor for each 800 students for school  
21 year 1997-1998.

22                   (b) One counselor for each 700 students for school  
23 year 1998-1999.

24                   (c) One counselor for each 600 students for school  
25 year 1999-2000.

26                   (2) For middle schools:

27                   (a) One counselor for each 700 students for school  
28 year 1997-1998.

29                   (b) One counselor for each 600 students for school  
30 year 1998-1999.

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1       (c) One counselor for each 500 students for school  
2 year 1999-2000.

3       (3) For high schools:

4       (a) One counselor for each 600 students for school  
5 year 1997-1998.

6       (b) One counselor for each 500 students for school  
7 year 1998-1999.

8       (c) One counselor for each 400 students for school  
9 year 1999-2000.

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11 If appropriated funds are not sufficient to achieve the ratios  
12 set forth in this section, each of the three school districts  
13 shall receive a FTE prorated share of available funds.

14       Section 2. Each pilot program school district shall  
15 conduct an evaluation of the pilot program and provide a  
16 report with recommendations to the President of the Senate and  
17 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1,  
18 2000.

19       Section 3. There is hereby appropriated from the  
20 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education the sum of  
21 \$8 million to be allocated on a FTE pro rata basis to the  
22 school districts in Dade, Orange, and Leon Counties for the  
23 purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act.

24       Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997.

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27                   HOUSE SUMMARY

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29       Creates a 3-year pilot program in Dade, Orange, and Leon  
30       Counties to provide additional counselors in the public  
31       schools, based on a ratio of counselors to students in  
      the elementary, middle, and high schools. Requires  
      evaluation of the pilot program with recommendations to  
      the Legislature. Provides an appropriation.