

**STORAGE NAME:** h0635a.ca  
**DATE:** March 18, 1997

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

**BILL #:** HB 635

**RELATING TO:** Pinellas Police Standards Council (Pinellas County)

**SPONSOR(S):** Representative Safley

**COMPANION BILL(S):** SB 878 (i)

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

- (1) COMMUNITY AFFAIRS YEAS 5 NAYS 0
  - (2) FINANCE AND TAXATION
  - (3)
  - (4)
  - (5)
- 

**I. SUMMARY:**

This bill ensures that the \$2 assessment used to fund the work of the Pinellas Police Standards Council (Council) remains a collectable court cost within Pinellas County. The bill reorganizes the Council's membership, removes terms of office and the method of filling vacancies.

The bill expands the opportunity for a centralized screening service for other public safety positions such as dispatchers, firefighters and paramedics. The bill authorizes the Council to contract with other entities for screening and assessment services including an allowance for overhead costs. The Council may charge applicants a fee to offset a portion of the screening costs. The bill renews the status of the organization as voluntary and includes a nonprofit status also.

The bill authorizes the Council to hire an executive director to carry on the Council's daily business activities and supervise other employees authorized by the Council.

The Economic Impact Statement indicates funding continues at the previously established level.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

The Pinellas Police Standards Council (Council), a voluntary organization, was created by the 1972 Legislature in response to grand jury proceedings identifying critical shortcomings in local law enforcement efforts and the need to improve professionalism. The enabling special act has been amended several times since 1972.

The Council's mission is to coordinate policy between law enforcement agencies, conduct studies, and make recommendations to the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation for improving the quality of law enforcement. The Police Applicant Screening Service (PASS) was established by the 1975 Legislature to provide a centralized screening and assessment center for prospective law enforcement officers in Pinellas County. Funding for this work is provided by a \$2 assessment on all civil and criminal traffic tickets written in the county, excluding bicycle, pedestrian and parking violations.

This regional assessment center has been so successful it became the model for five other centers in the state and several throughout the nation.

Chapter 96-350, Laws of Florida, inadvertently created questions regarding the funding of regional law enforcement assessment centers. According to a statement from Senator Malcolm Beard, the bill's sponsor, given to the Council, the act was never intended to affect assessment centers and no such impact was foreseen by the staff studies.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

This bill corrects a problem created when chapter 96-350, Laws of Florida, inadvertently created questions about the assessment centers' ability to continue receiving the \$2 assessment on all payable criminal and civil traffic offenses in Pinellas County.

The bill expands the opportunity of a centralized screening service for other public safety positions such as dispatchers, firefighters and paramedics. The bill authorizes the Council to contract with other entities for screening and assessment services including an allowance for overhead. The Council may charge applicants a fee to offset a portion of the screening costs. The bill renews the status of the organization as voluntary and includes a nonprofit status also.

The bill authorizes the Council to hire an executive director to carry on the Council's daily business activities and supervise other employees authorized by the Council.

The Council is composed of chiefs of police of the municipalities in Pinellas County, the Sheriff of Pinellas County, the State Attorney or his designee and the director of the Southeastern Public Safety Institute at St. Petersburg Junior College (Institute). The Institute is the successor to the Pinellas Police Academy.

The bill deletes the terms of office of Council members and the method of filling vacancies. Successors to the offices held by the Council members will fill vacancies as they arise and the terms of office are perpetual. The bill also updates language, corrects technical glitches and spelling errors.

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C. LAWS OF FLORIDA/FLORIDA STATUTES AFFECTED:

Chapter 74-666, Laws of Florida, as amended by chapters 75-495, 78-591, 82-369 and 85-490, 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 sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of chapter 72-666, Laws of Florida, as amended, adding nonprofit status to the Council; providing spelling changes; updating membership of the Council; deleting terms of office and method of filling vacancies; designating term of office of chair of the Council; adding to the powers of duties of the Council as follows:

- (a) provides authority to hire an executive director;
- (b) provides ability to make recommendations regarding employment and training of law enforcement officers and support personnel;
- (c) provides for a centralized screening and information center on prospective law enforcement officers in Pinellas County known as the "Public Safety Applicant Screening Service (PSASS);
- (d) removes obsolete language;
- (e) assesses fees, upon approval of county commission, to pay for the screening service and authorizing other fees to supplement screening costs; and
- (f) empowers the Council to offer applicant testing, screening, and information services for law enforcement applicants to the state and other entities; and

provides public-safety-related services on a contract basis; provides technical corrections to sections 5 and 6.

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

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III. NOTICE/REFERENDUM AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

A. NOTICE PUBLISHED? Yes  No

IF YES, WHEN? January 24, 1997

WHERE? Warfield's Tampa Bay Review, Clearwater, Pinellas 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:

None.

V. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

Two amendments were adopted by the Committee on Community Affairs on March 18, 1997. The amendments correct a reference and remove a word previously removed by chapter 85-490, Laws of Florida.

VI. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS:

Prepared by:

Legislative Research Director:

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