

By Senator Silver

38-367-99

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to empowerment zones; creating
 3 s. 290.0491, F.S.; creating the "Florida
 4 Empowerment Zone Act"; defining terms;
 5 providing legislative intent; providing for
 6 administration by the Department of Community
 7 Affairs; providing an appropriation; providing
 8 requirements for eligibility; providing an
 9 effective date.
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 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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 13 Section 1. Section 290.0491, Florida Statutes, is
 14 created to read:
 15 290.0491 Florida Empowerment Zones.--
 16 (1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the
 17 "Florida Empowerment Zone Act."
 18 (2) DEFINITIONS.--As used in this section, the term:
 19 (a) "Department" means the Department of Community
 20 Affairs.
 21 (b) "Federal Empowerment Zone Program" means the
 22 empowerment zone program established in 29 U.S.C. s. 1391 et
 23 seq.
 24 (c) "Nominated area" means an area nominated for
 25 participation in the Federal Empowerment Zone Program.
 26 (3) LEGISLATIVE INTENT.--The Legislature recognizes
 27 that it is in the public interest that the state create
 28 economic opportunity in poverty-stricken areas and rebuild
 29 such areas by empowering the people and communities within
 30 these areas to create jobs and opportunities. The U.S.
 31 Congress in 1997 provided that an additional 20 areas may be

1 designated as federal empowerment zones by January 1, 1999,
2 and, as such, be eligible for federal funding under the
3 Federal Empowerment Zone Program. The Legislature seeks to
4 promote local governments in submitting the strongest possible
5 proposals under the Federal Empowerment Zone Program by
6 establishing a companion state empowerment zone program.

7 (4) EMPOWERMENT ZONE PROGRAM.--There is created an
8 economic development program to be known as the Florida
9 Empowerment Zone Program. The program shall exist for 10 years
10 and, except as otherwise provided by law, be operated by the
11 Department of Community Affairs in conjunction with the
12 Federal Empowerment Zone Program.

13 (5) FUNDING.--Beginning in fiscal year 1999-2000, the
14 sum of \$5 million is appropriated to the Department of
15 Community Affairs each year during the 10-year program. The
16 funds must be distributed by the department to any local
17 government within the state which was awarded the Federal
18 Empowerment Zone designation under 26 U.S.C. s. 1391(g). The
19 funds must be used for the benefit of the nominated area and
20 are contingent upon the local government receiving federal
21 matching funds under federal law and meeting the local-match
22 requirements imposed by the federal empowerment regulations.

23 (6) GENERAL POWERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
24 AFFAIRS.--The department has all the powers necessary to carry
25 out the purposes of the Florida Empowerment Zone Program
26 including the power to adopt and enforce rules not
27 inconsistent with this section for the administration of the
28 fund.

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
30 law.

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SENATE SUMMARY

Creates the Florida Empowerment Zone Act to be administered by the Department of Community Affairs in conjunction with the Federal Empowerment Zone Program. Provides funding for the program.