

By the Committee on Judiciary and Senator Diaz-Balart

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to fees for self-help services;  
creating s. 25.389, F.S.; authorizing the chief  
judge of each circuit to establish the amount  
of the fees in certain cases; amending s.  
25.388, F.S.; providing for funds to be  
deposited in the Family Courts Trust Fund;  
providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 25.389, Florida Statutes, is  
created to read:

25.389 Fees for services to self-represented litigants  
in family-law cases.--

(1) A self-help fee not to exceed \$50 may be assessed  
to self-represented litigants in family-law cases for the  
forms necessary for one action and related services. No other  
fee may be assessed for family-law self-help services. The  
chief judge of each judicial circuit shall establish the  
amount of the fee and may include a waiver of the fee for  
indigency. The chief judge shall determine the specific  
services available in a circuit; however, the services  
provided shall be limited by rules of the Supreme Court. The  
amount of the maximum fee shall be adjusted annually by the  
Chief Justice on January 1, based upon the most recent  
adjustment to the consumer price index.

(2) Fees shall be paid to the clerk of the court. The  
clerk may retain a handling fee of \$1.50 and shall deposit the  
remainder of the funds in the Family Courts Trust Fund.

1           (3) The fees assessed under this section may be  
2 recovered as costs pursuant to s. 61.16.

3           Section 2. Subsection (3) of section 25.388, Florida  
4 Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to read:

5           25.388 Family Courts Trust Fund.--

6           (3) The trust fund shall be funded with moneys  
7 generated from fees assessed pursuant to ss. 28.101, 25.389,  
8 and 741.01(4).

9           Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
10 law.

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12           STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
13           COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
14           SB 2510

15 Clarifies that the bill's provisions apply only to litigants  
16 in family law cases.

17 Expressly establishes that no other fee may be assessed for  
18 family law self-help services.

19 Provides that any self-help fees assessed under this section  
20 may be recovered as costs pursuant to s. 61.16, F.S.

21 Changes the amount the clerk of the court may retain as a  
22 handling fee from 1% to \$1.50.  
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