

By Representative Littlefield

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to certified domestic violence
3 center capital improvement; creating s. 39.907,
4 F.S.; providing a mechanism for the
5 disbursement of funds to certified domestic
6 violence centers; providing application
7 requirements; prescribing uses of the funds;
8 providing duties of the Department of Children
9 and Family Services; providing for the
10 establishment of criteria for the disbursement
11 of funds; providing an effective date.

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13 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that domestic violence
14 remains one of Florida's leading social problems, and

15 WHEREAS, Florida has led the nation in legislative
16 efforts to reduce domestic violence, and victims are coming
17 forward in record numbers to seek help, and

18 WHEREAS, Florida's response to domestic violence
19 includes the services provided by the state's certified
20 domestic violence centers, such as mandated services which
21 include counseling, a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, case
22 management, information, and referral, assessment of resident
23 children, and community education and professional training,
24 and

25 WHEREAS, such services are designed to interrupt the
26 cycle of violence by providing services necessary to enhance
27 the safety and self-sufficiency of victims of domestic
28 violence, and

29 WHEREAS, emergency shelter is particularly critical, as
30 the period of separation brings with it escalating risk of
31 homicide, and

1 WHEREAS, many of Florida's domestic violence centers
2 are in need of renovation and repair, while other centers are
3 inadequate beyond repair, making it necessary for those
4 centers to build or purchase new facilities, and

5 WHEREAS, the ever-increasing demand for services has
6 prevented certified domestic violence centers from utilizing
7 already scarce resources for capital needs, and

8 WHEREAS, the need for a funding process to address the
9 growing needs of the state's certified domestic violence
10 centers is prevalent, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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14 Section 1. Section 39.907, Florida Statutes, is
15 created to read:

16 39.907 Certified domestic violence center capital
17 improvement.--There is established a certified domestic
18 violence center capital improvement grant program.

19 (1) A certified domestic violence center as defined in
20 s. 39.905 may apply to the department for a capital
21 improvement grant. The grant application must provide
22 information that includes:

23 (a) A statement indicating the capital improvement the
24 certified domestic violence center proposes to make with the
25 grant funds.

26 (b) The strategy proposed to make the capital
27 improvement.

28 (c) The organizational structure that will carry out
29 the capital improvement.

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1 (d) Evidence that the certified domestic violence
2 center has difficulty in obtaining funding or that funds
3 available for the proposed solution are inadequate.

4 (e) Evidence that the funds will assist in meeting the
5 needs of domestic violence victims and their children in the
6 certified domestic violence center service area.

7 (f) Evidence of a satisfactory recordkeeping system to
8 account for fund expenditures.

9 (g) Evidence of ability to generate a local match.

10 (2) Certified domestic violence centers as defined in
11 s. 39.905 may receive funding subject to legislative
12 appropriation, upon application to the department, for
13 projects to construct, acquire, repair, improve, or upgrade
14 systems, facilities, or equipment, subject to availability of
15 funds. An award of funds under this section shall be made in
16 accordance with a needs assessment developed by the Florida
17 Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the department. This
18 needs assessment shall be done annually by the department and
19 shall rank those centers that are requesting capital
20 improvement funding in order of need.

21 (3) The department shall establish criteria for
22 awarding any remaining funds, which must be used exclusively
23 for the support and assistance of certified domestic violence
24 centers as defined in s. 39.905.

25 (4) The department shall ensure that the funds are
26 used solely for the purposes specified in this section. The
27 total grants awarded pursuant to this section shall not exceed
28 the amount appropriated for this program.

29 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Provides a mechanism for the disbursement of funds to certified domestic violence centers. Provides application requirements and prescribes uses of the funds. Provides duties of the Department of Children and Family Services. Provides for the establishment of criteria for the disbursement of funds.