

STORAGE NAME: h2065.cf

DATE: March 26, 2000

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
Children & Families
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: HB 2065

RELATING TO: Florida Missing Children's Day

SPONSOR(S): Representative Starks

TIED BILL(S):

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

(1) CHILDREN & FAMILIES

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

I. SUMMARY:

The bill creates s. 683.23, Florida Statutes, that designates the second Monday in September of each year as "Florida Missing Children's Day" in remembrance of Florida's past and missing children, and in recognition of Florida's continued efforts to protect the safety of children through prevention, education and community involvement.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

Missing Children

In 1999 approximately 750,000 missing children were reported to the FBI's National Crime Information Center, almost 2,100 children per day. The vast majority of missing children are runaways age 14 to 17. The second-largest grouping of children listed as missing is classified as "non-custodial abduction." While the vast majority of America's children come home safely, some abductions end tragically in rape, assault and even death.

In Florida, 55,978 children were reported missing in 1999, according to the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Of these 3.6 %, 2,002, were reported to be in danger. (The dangers included 1,379 children reported to be in physical danger, 290 abducted, and 304 children with some physical or mental disability that placed them in immediate danger.) More than half of the endangered children in Florida were under 14 years of age, 34 were five years old or younger. (This information is compiled and reported monthly from the National Crime Information Center of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from reports by local law enforcement agencies. Due to conversion of the FBI data system, July data is missing and the average monthly number is substituted.)

Improvements in Finding Missing Children

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), the reasons for improvement include technology that is helping transmit images and information instantly, and increased public attention to missing children photos. The NCMEC is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1984, that works in cooperation with the Department of Justice, to serve as the national resource center and clearinghouse on missing and exploited child cases. This includes preventing abductions, finding missing children and reuniting them with their families, and addressing the psychological impact of abduction on the child and the family, and setting up multi-agency and interdisciplinary responses to missing and exploited children.

Of the cases of missing children called into NCMEC's hotline over fourteen years, 68 percent were runaways, 25 percent were children who had been abducted by family

members, 4 percent were children found to have been lost, injured or otherwise missing, and 3 percent were children taken by a nonfamily member.

Florida Missing Children Information

In 1982, the Florida Legislature funded the first state Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MCIC) in the nation in the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The program provides liaison among citizens, private organizations and law enforcement officials regarding missing children information. As part of the MCIC's services, a toll-free number, 1-888-356-4774, is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Additional services provided include a directory of resources available for additional assistance in locating a child; emergency flyers requested by law enforcement agencies containing descriptions of missing children believed to be in immediate danger; training for law enforcement agencies and public/private organizations regarding the operations of the MCIC; and a child safety guide which includes a list of precautions and programs to insure our children's safety.

Missing Children Day

Because the more people involved, the better the chances are of finding a child, the NCMEC sponsors a national Missing Children Day, May 25, to increase public awareness of issues regarding missing and exploited children. Florida does not have a Missing Children Day to increase public awareness of how to prevent abductions and how to respond to reports of missing children.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

The bill creates s. 683.23, F.S., designating the second Monday in September as Florida Missing Children's Day.

The bill establishes the intent of the Legislature to protect the safety of our children through education and prevention efforts, and increased awareness of the problem by parents, citizens and law enforcement officers, and to remember children abducted, abused, and murdered and persevere in the search for children not yet found.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Section 1. Creates s. 683.23, F.S., relating to Florida Missing Children's Day.

The bill designates the second Monday in September of each year as "Florida Missing Children's Day" in remembrance of Florida's past and missing children and in recognition of Florida's continued efforts to protect the safety of children through prevention, education and community involvement.

Section 2. Establishes the act becomes effective upon becoming a law.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

N/A

2. Expenditures:

N/A

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

N/A

2. Expenditures:

N/A

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

N/A

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

N/A

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

The bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax sheared with counties or municipalities.

STORAGE NAME: h2065.cf

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PAGE 5

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

N/A

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

N/A

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

N/A

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

N/A

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES:

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