

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: SB 2226

SPONSOR: Senator Silver

SUBJECT: Certified Domestic Violence Centers

DATE: April 10, 2000 REVISED: 4/13/00 _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Dowds</u>	<u>Whiddon</u>	<u>CF</u>	<u>Fav/2 Amendments</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

SB 2226 establishes the certified domestic violence center capital improvement grant program which provides a mechanism for certified domestic violence centers to apply for grant funds from the Department of Children and Family Services for capital improvements. Each certified domestic violence center may apply to the Department of Children and Family Services for a capital improvement grant to construct, acquire, repair, improve, or upgrade systems, facilities, or equipment. The minimum requirements for information that must be included in the grant application are stipulated. The Department of Children and Family Services and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence are directed to develop a needs assessment instrument that will be used to conduct an assessment of the domestic violence centers' capital improvement needs each year and provide a mechanism to rank the needs of those centers requesting funds for capital improvements. The total amount of grant moneys awarded are not to exceed the funds appropriated for this program.

This bill creates a new section of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Domestic violence is a very serious problem across the nation and in Florida. A national survey on violence against women found that 52 percent of the women surveyed had been physically assaulted as either a child or an adult. Based on the data from this survey, it was estimated that approximately 1.9 million women are physically assaulted annually in the United States. A survey of the victim assistance programs in the country revealed that the majority of individuals seeking assistance were victims of domestic violence. In Florida, 133,345 police reports were filed in 1998 for domestic violence offenses and 64,446 arrests were made. These numbers do not include the many injunctions for protection against domestic violence ordered which did not have a corresponding criminal offense or the many more victims who do not request assistance.

In Florida, multiple efforts are underway to impact the problem of domestic violence. One component that is a cornerstone to these efforts is the certified domestic violence centers. Part XI of ch. 39, F.S., provides for the certification and funding of domestic violence centers and for the responsibilities of the Department of Children and Family Services in this process. "Domestic violence center" is defined in s. 39.902(2), F.S., as an agency that provides services to victims of domestic violence as its primary mission. Section 39.905(1), F.S., sets forth the requirements that domestic violence centers must meet in order to be certified by the Department of Children and Family Services. These requirements include that domestic violence centers offer a wide range of services to and on behalf of victims of domestic violence, minor children and other dependents of victims of domestic violence, including but not limited to information and referral services, counseling and case management services, temporary emergency shelter for more than 24 hours, a 24 hour hotline, training for law enforcement personnel, assessment and appropriate referral of resident children and educational services for community awareness. During the fiscal year 1998-1999, 13,578 victims of domestic violence and their children were provided with emergency shelter. However, an additional 1,471 victims and their children were turned down due to lack of space.

Currently, there are 38 certified domestic violence centers in Florida. Below is a list of the centers and the counties that they serve:

Certified Domestic Violence Center	Counties Served
Favorhouse of NW Florida	Escambia and Santa Rosa
Shelter House, Inc.	Okaloosa and Walton
Salvation Army of Panama City	Bay, Gulf, Holmes, Washington, Jackson, and Calhoun
Refuge House	Taylor, Madison, Jefferson, Leon, Wakulla, Franklin, Gadsden, and Liberty
Another Way	Levy, Gilchrist, Dixie, Lafayette, Hamilton, Suwannee, and Columbia
SPARC	Bradford, Alachua, Putnam, and Union
Hubbard House	Duval, Nassau, and Baker
Quigley House	Clay
Betty Griffin House	St. Johns
CASA	Pinellas (South)
The Haven of RCS	Pinellas (North)
Salvation Army of West Pasco	Pasco (West)
Sunrise of Pasco	Pasco (East)

Hope Family Services	Manatee
The Spring of Tampa Bay	Hillsborough
Help Now of Osceola	Osceola
Salvation Army	Brevard
Harbor House (Spouse Abuse, Inc.)	Orange
Serene Harbor	Brevard
Seminole Safehouse	Seminole
Abuse, Counseling, and Treatment	Lee, Hendry, and Glades
Safe Place (SPARCC)	Sarasota
CARE of Charlotte County	Charlotte
Shelter for Abused Women (SAWCC)	Collier
Aid to Victims of Domestic Assault	Palm Beach
YWCA Harmony House	Palm Beach
Women in Distress	Broward
Metro Dade Advocates for Victims (Safespace)	Dade
Domestic Abuse Shelter, Inc.	Monroe
Domestic Abuse Council	Volusia
Family Life Center	Flagler
Citrus County Abuse Shelter	Citrus
Creative Services	Marion
Haven of Lake and Sumter	Lake and Sumter
Dawn Center (Salvare)	Hernando
Peace River Center	Lakeland and Sebring
Martha's House	Okeechobee
Safespace Domestic Violence Services	St. Lucie

Funding collected and appropriated for domestic violence centers is distributed annually by the Department of Children and Family Services to districts for certified centers, primarily utilizing an allocation formula established by the department. This funding includes federal funds through the

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding for the Diversion Program for Victims of Domestic Violence, s. 414.157, F.S., (created in ch. 99-241, L.O.F.); general revenue funds; and fees collected and deposited into the Domestic Violence Trust Fund, pursuant to ss. 741.01(2) and 28.101(1)(c), F.S.. Domestic Violence centers are required to receive at least 25 percent of their funding from other public or private, local, municipal, or county sources.

For fiscal year 1999-2000, a total of \$16,375,357 from all sources was appropriated to the Department of Children and Family Services for domestic violence centers. However, none of this funding can be used by the centers to repair, improve, construct, or purchase the facilities or equipment. Those centers attempting to generate the dollars to make the necessary repairs or build a new facility undertake a capital campaign and work with their community to raise the dollars.

The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports that 20 of the 38 certified domestic centers are currently in need of renovations and repair and an additional 10 facilities are estimated to be beyond repair and require replacement. Some of the renovations needed include the addition of bed space, private quarters where older teenage boys can be safely sheltered with their mothers, expanded services for children including on-site child care, and handicapped accessibility. The Refuge House in Tallahassee is an example of a center that requires a new facility. It serves eight north Florida counties with only a three bedroom house. The house itself was never designed for group living and as a result provides minimal capability for confidentiality, privacy, or special services for children.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 2226 establishes the certified domestic violence center capital improvement grant program which provides a mechanism for certified domestic violence centers to apply for a grant from the Department of Children and Family Services for capital improvements. Each certified domestic violence center, as defined in s. 39.905, F.S., may apply to the Department of Children and Family Services for a capital improvement grant to construct, acquire, repair, improve, or upgrade systems, facilities, or equipment. The grant application must include the following: a statement specifying the capital improvement that the center proposes to make, the proposed strategy for making the capital improvement, the organizational structure that will carry out the capital improvement, evidence that the center has difficulty obtaining the funds or that funds available for the proposed improvements are inadequate, evidence that the capital improvement funds will assist in meeting the needs of victims of domestic violence and their children, evidence of a satisfactory record keeping system to account for fund expenditures, and evidence of ability to generate local match.

The Department of Children and Family Services and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence are to develop a needs assessment instrument. The department is directed to conduct an assessment of domestic violence centers' capital improvement needs each year and use the results to rank the needs of those centers requesting funds for capital improvements. Awards of capital improvement grant funds must be in accordance with the needs assessment.

The Department of Children and Family Services is directed to develop criteria for awarding any remaining funds. These funds are to be used exclusively for the support and assistance of certified domestic centers. The reference to “remaining funds” and “support and assistance” of the centers implies that some funds will be remaining after the awards of the capital improvement grant funds that will be used for the general assistance to the domestic violence centers, which may not be the intent.

The Department of Children and Family Services must ensure that the funds awarded under this section are used solely for the purposes specified in this section. The total amount of grant moneys awarded are not to exceed the funds appropriated for this program.

SB 2226 provides certified domestic violence centers with a funding mechanism for capital improvements to center facilities. This funding mechanism provides uniform documentation of the need for capital improvements and structure for the consideration of funding. While certified domestic violence centers are not relieved of their current responsibility to conduct capital campaigns to raise funds for capital improvement, their fund raising efforts will be enhanced with the availability of these grant funds. Implementation of the grant fund program is contingent upon the allocation of funds for capital improvements.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

There are 38 certified domestic violence centers with approximately 1,150 beds available for emergency shelter. These centers have had difficulty generating the funds to both expand the

number of beds that can be offered as well as improve the quality of the facilities and the services available. While centers would be required to generate local match to the capital improvement grant, the grant funds provided in the bill would enhance the certified domestic violence centers' ability to make capital improvements that will provide emergency shelter to more victims, potentially make transitional (i.e., longer term) shelter available, provide greater handicap accessibility, provide more space for the various services offered to victims, and improve the equipment and quality of the facilities.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Department of Children and Family Services reports that the bill would require additional staff time to initiate and maintain the grant program. A one-half position (or its contracted equivalent) is projected for the first year to initiate the grant program, and one-quarter of a position (or its contracted equivalent) for the grant program's annual maintenance. The cost of these positions is estimated at \$37,283 for the first year and \$26,863 for subsequent years.

The bill does not contain an appropriation for the capital improvement grants.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

Section 39.908(1), F.S., provides for the confidentiality of the location of domestic violence centers. However, while this capital improvement grant program by necessity will contain information on the location of the centers, it does not reference this confidentiality of location provided to the centers.

The reference to use of "remaining funds," combined with the stipulation that these funds be used for "support and assistance" to domestic violence centers implies that a two tiered grant program is being established.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

1 by Children and Families:

Corrects a reference to establishing criteria for "remaining funds," adds that the criteria be developed in collaboration with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and clarifies that the support and assistance to domestic violence centers is for their capital improvement needs.

2 by Children and Families:

Restates the confidentiality of the location of the certified domestic violence centers already required by statute for the capital improvement grant process.

