

By the Committees on Commerce and Economic Opportunities;  
Comprehensive Planning, Local and Military Affairs; and  
Senators Hargrett, Latvala, Holzendorf, Childers, Laurent and  
Meek

310-1957-00

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to community development;  
3           creating the Community and Faith-based  
4           Organizations initiative within the Institute  
5           on Urban Policy and Commerce at Florida  
6           Agricultural and Mechanical University;  
7           providing for the initiative to promote  
8           community development through partnerships with  
9           community and faith-based organizations;  
10          specifying the activities to be conducted by  
11          the initiative; providing for financial  
12          assistance to community and faith-based  
13          organizations; requiring the development of  
14          grant-selection criteria; requiring leveraging  
15          of funds; creating the Community and Library  
16          Technology Access Partnership; specifying the  
17          activities to be conducted by the partnership;  
18          requiring the Institute on Urban Policy and  
19          Commerce at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical  
20          University to administer the initiative and the  
21          Division of Library and Information Services of  
22          the Department of State to administer the  
23          Community and Library Technology Access  
24          Partnership; authorizing certain activities and  
25          uses of funds; providing appropriations;  
26          creating a community computer-access grant  
27          program, to be known as the Community  
28          High-Technology Investment Partnership, or  
29          "CHIP," program; providing legislative intent;  
30          providing purposes of the program; providing  
31          for grants to be awarded to eligible

1 neighborhood facilities; providing for the  
2 Division of Libraries and Information Services  
3 of the Department of State to administer the  
4 grant program; providing requirements for grant  
5 applications; prescribing the maximum amount of  
6 a grant; requiring a grant agreement between  
7 the division and the recipient facility;  
8 providing for establishing minimum  
9 specifications of computers purchased under the  
10 program; providing for an evaluation and a  
11 report; providing an appropriation; providing  
12 an effective date.

13

14 WHEREAS, many community and faith-based organizations  
15 are providing a new focus on economic uplift in Florida's poor  
16 and most vulnerable neighborhoods, and

17 WHEREAS, these nonprofit organizations have local  
18 experts who serve in leadership roles by assisting individuals  
19 to move from dependency to self-sufficiency and restoring the  
20 lives of residents in Florida's most distressed communities,  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, crime, drug addiction, teenage pregnancy,  
23 homelessness, and juvenile delinquency, the most notable  
24 indicators of a distressed community, are being addressed by  
25 small, and sometimes unrecognized, community and faith-based  
26 organizations, and

27 WHEREAS, the leadership and expertise of these  
28 organizations should not be ignored, and

29 WHEREAS, a recognized effort to empower community and  
30 faith-based organizations, encourage community revitalization,  
31 and implement educational reform will assist those who reside

1 in inner cities and distressed rural communities to gain their  
2 share of the state's resources, and

3 WHEREAS, residents of low income communities lack  
4 access to technology, the internet, and computer literacy  
5 needed to succeed in Florida's emerging information based  
6 economy, and

7 WHEREAS, Florida public libraries eligible for e-rate  
8 discounts have the capacity to partner effectively with  
9 community and faith-based organizations and agencies to  
10 provide technology access and training to assist in closing  
11 the digital divide, NOW, THEREFORE,

12

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

14

15 Section 1. Community and Faith-based Organizations  
16 Initiative; Community and Library Technology Access  
17 Partnership.--

18 (1) CREATION.--There is created the Community and  
19 Faith-based Organizations Initiative which shall be  
20 administered by the Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce at  
21 Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and the  
22 Community and Library Technology Access Partnership which  
23 shall be administered by the Division of Library and  
24 Information Services of the Department of State.

25 (2) INTENT.--The purpose of the initiative is to  
26 promote community development in low-income communities  
27 through partnerships with not-for-profit community and  
28 faith-based organizations. The purpose of the partnership is  
29 to encourage public libraries eligible for e-rate discounted  
30 telecommunications services to partner with community and  
31 faith-based organizations to provide technology access and

1 training to assist other state efforts to close the digital  
2 divide.

3 (3) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.--

4 (a) Authorized activities of the initiative.--The  
5 Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce at Florida Agricultural  
6 and Mechanical University may conduct the following activities  
7 as part of the Community and Faith-based Organizations  
8 Initiative:

9 1. Create and operate training programs to enhance the  
10 professional skills of individuals in community and  
11 faith-based organizations.

12 2. Create and operate a program to select and place  
13 students and recent graduates from business and related  
14 professional schools as interns with community and faith-based  
15 organizations for a period not to exceed 1 year, and provide  
16 stipends for such interns.

17 3. Organize an annual conference for community and  
18 faith-based organizations to discuss and share information on  
19 best practices regarding issues relevant to the creation,  
20 operation, and sustainability of these organizations.

21 4. Provide funding for the development of materials  
22 for courses on topics in the area of community development,  
23 and for research on economic, operational, and policy issues  
24 relating to community development.

25 5. Provide financial assistance to community and  
26 faith-based organizations through small grants for  
27 partnerships with universities and the operation of programs  
28 to build strong communities and future community development  
29 leaders. The Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce at Florida  
30 Agricultural and Mechanical University shall develop selection  
31

1 criteria for awarding such grants which are based on the goals  
2 of the initiative.

3  
4 The institute, to the maximum extent possible, shall leverage  
5 state funding for the initiative with any federal funding that  
6 the institute may receive to support similar community-based  
7 activities.

8 (b) Authorized activities of the partnership.--The  
9 Division of Library and Information Services of the Department  
10 of State may conduct the following activities as part of the  
11 Community and Library Technology Access Partnership:

12 1. Provide funding for e-rate eligible public  
13 libraries to provide technology access and training to  
14 community and faith-based organizations. Funding provided  
15 under this subparagraph must be for eligible public libraries  
16 in distressed communities in the state. The division shall  
17 consult with the Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce to  
18 identify such communities and to develop criteria to be used  
19 in evaluating funding proposals. The division shall coordinate  
20 with the institute to ensure that, to the maximum extent  
21 possible, the division and the institute leverage their  
22 resources under the programs authorized by this section in  
23 order to focus efforts on addressing the most distressed  
24 communities in the state. The division shall include a  
25 representative of the institute on a review team to evaluate  
26 funding proposals under this subparagraph.

27 2. Provide a method of assessment and outcome  
28 measurement for e-rate eligible public libraries to assess  
29 progress in closing the digital divide and in training for  
30 individuals to succeed in the emerging information economy.

31

1           (4) FUNDING.--There is appropriated from the General  
2 Revenue Fund in fiscal year 2000-2001 the amount of \$2.5  
3 million to the Institute on Urban Policy and Commerce at  
4 Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University to administer  
5 the Community and Faith-based Organizations Initiative. There  
6 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund in fiscal year  
7 2000-2001 the amount of \$0.5 million to the Division of  
8 Library and Information Services to provide Community and  
9 Library Technology Access Partnership grants to e-rate  
10 eligible public libraries. Funding shall not be used for  
11 religious or sectarian purposes.

12           Section 2. Community computer access grant program.--

13           (1) The Legislature finds that there is a growing  
14 digital divide in the state, manifested in the fact that many  
15 youths from distressed urban communities do not possess the  
16 degree and ease of access to computers and information  
17 technologies which youths in other communities in the state  
18 possess. This disparity in access to rapidly changing and  
19 commercially significant technologies has a negative impact on  
20 the educational, workforce development, and employment  
21 competitiveness of these needy youths, and thereby impedes the  
22 economic development of the distressed urban communities in  
23 which these youths reside. Although many public libraries  
24 offer users access to computers and are increasingly making  
25 library materials available to the public through electronic  
26 means, many youths from distressed urban communities do not  
27 live near a library that has such technology and do not have  
28 computers to access Internet-based virtual libraries.  
29 Neighborhood organizations, such as churches, are more likely,  
30 however, to be located in closer proximity to the homes of  
31 these youths than are educational institutions or libraries,

1 and these youths are more likely to gain the desirable  
2 computer access at church-related or other neighborhood  
3 facilities than at other institutions. The Legislature  
4 therefore finds that a public purpose is served in enhancing  
5 the ability of youths from these communities to have access to  
6 computers and the Internet within the neighborhoods in which  
7 they reside.

8 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation, the Division  
9 of Library and Information Services of the Department of  
10 State, in consultation with the State Technology Office and  
11 the state's Chief Information Officer, shall establish a  
12 Community High-Technology Investment Partnership (CHIP)  
13 program to assist distressed urban communities in securing  
14 computers for access by youths between the ages of 5 years and  
15 18 years who reside in these communities.

16 (3)(a) Under this program, neighborhood facilities,  
17 through their governing bodies, may apply to the division for  
18 grants to purchase computers that will be available for use by  
19 eligible youths who reside in the immediate vicinity of the  
20 neighborhood facility. For purposes of this program, eligible  
21 neighborhood facilities include, but are not limited to,  
22 facilities operated by:

23 1. Units of local government, including school  
24 districts;

25 2. Not-for-profit, faith-based organizations,  
26 including neighborhood churches;

27 3. Not-for-profit civic associations or homeowners'  
28 associations; and

29 4. Not-for-profit organizations, the missions of which  
30 include improving conditions for residents of distressed urban  
31 communities.

1           (b) Notwithstanding the eligibility of the  
2 organizations identified in paragraph (a), the division shall  
3 give priority consideration for funding under this program to  
4 applications submitted by neighborhood churches or by  
5 neighborhood-based, not-for-profit organizations that have as  
6 a principal part of their missions the improvement of  
7 conditions for residents of the same neighborhoods in which  
8 the organizations are located. The division also shall give  
9 priority consideration to organizations that demonstrate that  
10 they have not been awarded community enhancement or similar  
11 community support grants from state or local government on a  
12 regular basis in the past. The division shall develop weighted  
13 criteria to be used in evaluating applications from such  
14 churches or organizations. Funding under this section shall  
15 not be used for religious or sectarian purposes.

16           (4) The division shall develop guidelines governing  
17 the administration of this program and shall establish  
18 criteria to be used in evaluating an application for funding.  
19 At a minimum, the division must find that:

20           (a) The neighborhood that is to be served by the grant  
21 suffers from general economic distress;

22           (b) Eligible youths who reside in the vicinity of the  
23 neighborhood facility have difficulty obtaining access to a  
24 library or schools that have sufficient computers; and

25           (c) The neighborhood facility has developed a detailed  
26 plan, as required under subsection (5), for:

27           1. Providing youths who reside in the vicinity of the  
28 facility with access to any computer purchased with grant  
29 funds, including evening and weekend access when libraries and  
30 schools are closed; and

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1           2. Promoting the maximum participation of neighborhood  
2 youths in use of any computers purchased with grant funds.

3           (5) As part of an application for funding, the  
4 neighborhood facility must submit a plan that demonstrates:

5           (a) The manner in which eligible youths who reside in  
6 the immediate vicinity of the facility will be provided with  
7 access to any computer purchased with grant funds, including  
8 access during hours when libraries and schools are closed;

9           (b) The existence of safeguards to ensure that any  
10 computer purchased with grant funds is reserved for the  
11 educational use of eligible youths who reside in the immediate  
12 vicinity of the facility and is not used to support the  
13 business operations of the neighborhood facility or its  
14 governing body; and

15           (c) The existence, in the neighborhood facility, of  
16 telecommunications infrastructure necessary to guarantee  
17 access to the Internet through any computer purchased with  
18 grant funds.

19           (6) The maximum amount of a grant which may be awarded  
20 to any single neighborhood facility under this program is  
21 \$2,500.

22           (7) Before the division may allocate funds for a grant  
23 under this program, the division and the eligible neighborhood  
24 facility must execute a grant agreement that governs the terms  
25 and conditions of the grant.

26           (8) The division, based upon guidance from the State  
27 Technology Office and the state's Chief Information Officer,  
28 shall establish minimum requirements governing the  
29 specifications and capabilities of any computers purchased  
30 with funds awarded under this grant program.

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1           (9) Before the 2002 Regular Session of the  
2 Legislature, the division shall evaluate the outcomes of this  
3 program and report the results of the evaluation to the  
4 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
5 House of Representatives. At a minimum, the evaluation must  
6 assess the extent to which the program has improved access to  
7 computers for youths who reside in distressed urban  
8 communities. As part of this report, the division shall  
9 identify any impediments to the effective implementation and  
10 utilization of the program and shall make recommendations on  
11 methods to eliminate any such impediments. In addition, the  
12 division shall make recommendations as to whether it would be  
13 sound public policy to continue the program; whether the  
14 program should be expanded to address additional target  
15 populations, including, but not limited to, youths in  
16 distressed rural communities and adults in distressed urban or  
17 rural communities; and whether the list of neighborhood  
18 facilities eligible to participate in the program should be  
19 revised or whether priority consideration for funding should  
20 be revised to emphasize a particular type of neighborhood  
21 facility. The report required under this subsection must be  
22 submitted by January 1, 2002.

23           Section 3. The sum of \$500,000 is appropriated from  
24 the General Revenue Fund to the Division of Library and  
25 Information Services of the Department of State for the  
26 purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act creating  
27 the Community High-Technology Investment Partnership during  
28 the 2000-2001 fiscal year.

29           Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.  
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1 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
2 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
3 CS/SB 406

4 This committee substitute requires the Institute on Urban  
5 Policy and Commerce (institute) at the Florida Agricultural  
6 and Mechanical University, to the maximum extent possible, to  
7 leverage state funding with federal funding for support of the  
8 Community and Faith-based Organizations Initiative  
9 (initiative).

10 The Division of Library and Information Services (division) of  
11 the Department of State must provide funding under the  
12 Community and Library Technology Access Partnership  
13 (partnership) to those eligible libraries located in  
14 distressed urban areas, and both the division and the  
15 institute must leverage the resources of the initiative and  
16 partnership programs to focus efforts on the most distressed  
17 communities in the state.

18 In addition, the committee substitute requires the division to  
19 establish a Community High-Technology Investment Partnership  
20 (CHIP) program to assist neighborhood facilities in distressed  
21 urban communities in securing computers for access by youths  
22 between the ages of 5 years and 18 years who reside in these  
23 communities. Under this program, neighborhood facilities,  
24 including units of local government, not-for-profit  
25 faith-based organizations, not-for-profit civic associations  
26 or homeowners' associations, and other not-for-profit  
27 organizations with a community development mission, may apply  
28 to the division for grants to purchase computers that will be  
29 available for use by eligible youths who reside in the  
30 immediate vicinity of the neighborhood facility.

31 The maximum amount of a grant which may be awarded to any  
single neighborhood facility under this program is \$2,500, and  
no funding may be used for religious or sectarian purposes.  
The committee substitute appropriates \$500,000 from the  
General Revenue Fund to the division to carry out the  
provisions of the CHIP program.