

By the Committee on Commerce and Economic Opportunities

310-419A-00

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the WAGES Program; providing
3 legislative intent; authorizing grants for
4 certain WAGES-related community redevelopment
5 projects; providing for applications; requiring
6 innovative use of funds; authorizing rulemaking
7 by the Department of Community Affairs;
8 requiring the Department of Children and Family
9 Services and the WAGES Program State Board of
10 Directors to provide technical assistance;
11 providing an effective date.

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

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15 Section 1. Comeback Communities.--It is the intent of
16 the Legislature to reduce reliance on government assistance,
17 and to reduce recidivism among those who have become
18 self-sufficient, through the support of community-based
19 redevelopment initiatives that create safe, economically
20 viable, and enriching environments for needy families. It is
21 also the intent of the Legislature to promote the success of
22 the WAGES Program by addressing the economic viability of
23 distressed communities in which many current or former WAGES
24 Program participants or other needy families reside.

25 (1) The Department of Community Affairs, subject to
26 legislative appropriation, shall provide Comeback Communities
27 grants to effectuate projects included in local community
28 redevelopment plans. Projects must emanate from an existing
29 community redevelopment plan that:

30 (a) Covers an area with a high concentration of former
31 or current WAGES Program participants or of families that

1 would likely meet the requirements of eligibility for the
2 WAGES Program;

3 (b) Is undergoing implementation;

4 (c) Is community-based; and

5 (d) Comprehensively addresses the community's
6 problems.

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8 When the criteria specified in paragraphs (a)-(d) are met,
9 plans may include, but are not limited to, those required
10 under the Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area, Florida Main
11 Street program, Front Porch Florida, sustainable community,
12 enterprise zone, or neighborhood improvement district.

13 (2) Projects must be for the benefit of families who
14 are current or former WAGES Program participants or who would
15 likely meet the requirements of eligibility for the WAGES
16 Program.

17 (3) The Department of Community Affairs shall actively
18 solicit applications for the Comeback Communities grant
19 program from community-based organizations, local governments,
20 and neighborhood associations, and shall provide assistance to
21 these entities in identifying eligible projects. An applicant
22 must demonstrate its involvement in the development and
23 implementation of a community redevelopment plan. An
24 applicant also must identify, and demonstrate the fiscal
25 accountability of, a local administrative entity charged with
26 receiving grant funds and otherwise administering the grant.

27 (4) Grants must be used for purposes consistent with
28 federal law. However, the Department of Community Affairs,
29 with the assistance of the Department of Children and Family
30 Services and the WAGES Program State Board of Directors, shall
31 aggressively pursue innovative uses of the funds, including

1 support for projects that reduce crime, encourage business
2 development, stimulate employment, upgrade housing, beautify
3 neighborhoods, and increase educational opportunities.

4 (5) The Department of Community Affairs may adopt
5 rules governing the submission of applications, the evaluation
6 of applications, and the award and receipt of funds under this
7 program. The rules must include requirements for an applicant
8 receiving funds under this program to report to the department
9 on the status, expenditures, and outcomes of the project.

10 (6) The Department of Children and Family Services and
11 the WAGES Program State Board of Directors shall provide
12 technical assistance and consultation to the Department of
13 Community Affairs in its administration of this program.

14 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
15 law.

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18 SENATE SUMMARY

19 Authorizes grants for certain WAGES-related community
20 redevelopment projects.

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