

By the Committee on Judiciary and Senator Laurent

308-1724-00

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to elder assistance centers;
3 creating s. 26.59, F.S.; authorizing the chief
4 judge in the Tenth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth
5 Judicial Circuits to create an elder assistance
6 center for certain purposes; establishing
7 duties; providing an appropriation to establish
8 pilot programs in such circuits for such
9 purposes; providing reporting requirements;
10 requiring elder assistance centers to conduct
11 surveys for certain purposes; providing an
12 effective date.

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

16 Section 1. Section 26.59, Florida Statutes, is created
17 to read:

18 26.59 Elder assistance centers.--The chief judge of
19 each judicial circuit may create an elder assistance center.
20 The elder assistance center shall facilitate access to the
21 justice system for persons 60 years of age or older who
22 require special assistance or accommodation. The elder
23 assistance center shall:

24 (1) Work with the Americans with Disabilities Act
25 coordinator to assist elderly persons with disabilities.

26 (2) Assist the court in managing cases in which an
27 elderly person is a party so that these cases can be handled
28 expeditiously.

29 (3) Coordinate access to agencies that provide
30 services to elderly persons.

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1 (4) Provide education to elderly persons concerning
2 the operation of the judicial system.

3 (5) Gather information and provide documentation
4 concerning the special needs of elderly persons in the
5 judicial system.

6 (6) Evaluate the use of new technology, such as video
7 conferencing, to assist elderly persons who are impaired in
8 their ability to travel from their homes to the courthouse.

9 (7) Designate a person to act as liaison with the
10 Statewide Public Guardianship Office.

11 Section 2. The sum of \$1,050,000 is appropriated from
12 the General Revenue Fund, to be divided equally between the
13 Tenth, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Judicial Circuits to implement
14 pilot programs to test the efficacy of the elder assistance
15 center program. Judicial circuits implementing the pilot
16 program shall provide a report to the Governor, the President
17 of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
18 and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court no later than
19 December 31, 2001, describing the activities of the elder
20 assistance center, the number of cases handled, the types of
21 needs met, and the overall effectiveness of the program. The
22 elder assistance center shall create a consumer survey that
23 shall be provided to each elderly person, or family member
24 representing an elderly person, asking for feedback on the
25 elder assistance center's performance and the usefulness of
26 services provided.

27 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
28 law.

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STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SB 936

Redesignates the bill as creating s. 26.59, F.S.
Changes the name of the created entity from "elder division" to "elder assistance center" and provides that the elder assistance center shall assist the court in managing cases in which an elderly person is a party so that these cases can be handled expeditiously.