

By Representative Wallace

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to state government; creating  
3           the "Florida Customer Service Standards Act";  
4           providing definitions; specifying measures that  
5           state departments are directed to implement  
6           with respect to interaction with their  
7           customers; providing requirements regarding  
8           operating hours; providing that failure to  
9           comply with the act does not constitute a cause  
10          of action; providing exceptions; providing an  
11          effective date.  
12  
13          WHEREAS, confidence in the government's ability to  
14          solve problems has been deteriorating for the past three  
15          decades; in 1963, the national public's confidence level rated  
16          75 percent, compared to 1993, when confidence levels rated as  
17          low as 17 percent, and  
18          WHEREAS, there is a need for customers to be treated  
19          with courtesy and respect, to have simplified access to  
20          services, to have services that are efficient, to have  
21          communications that are clear and easily understood, and to  
22          save money, and  
23          WHEREAS, the State of Florida is dedicated to improving  
24          the service standards practiced by state departments, NOW,  
25          THEREFORE,  
26  
27          Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
28  
29                  Section 1. Florida Customer Service Standards Act.--  
30                  (1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the  
31 "Florida Customer Service Standards Act."

- 1       (2) PURPOSE.--It is the purpose of this section to  
2 direct state departments to practice and employ all the  
3 measures set forth in this section.
- 4       (3) DEFINITIONS.--As used in this section:
- 5       (a) "Customer" means any member of the public who uses  
6 or requests services or information provided by a state  
7 department or who is required by statute to interact with the  
8 department.
- 9       (b) "Department" means a principal administrative unit  
10 within the executive branch of state government, as defined in  
11 chapter 20, Florida Statutes, and also includes the Public  
12 Service Commission.
- 13       (4) MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED.--State departments  
14 shall:
- 15       (a) Designate an employee or employees in the  
16 department who shall be responsible for facilitating the  
17 resolution of customer complaints, including any customer  
18 complaints regarding unsatisfactory treatment by department  
19 employees.
- 20       (b) Provide available information, except information  
21 which is confidential pursuant to any other state or federal  
22 law, and accurate responses to questions and requests for  
23 assistance in a prompt manner.
- 24       (c) Acknowledge receipt of a telephonic or electronic  
25 question or request by the end of the next business day.
- 26       (d) Provide direct local or toll-free telephonic or  
27 direct electronic access to the department employee or  
28 employees designated to resolve customer complaints.
- 29       (e) Develop a process for review by upper-level  
30 management of any customer complaints not resolved by the  
31 department employee or employees designated to resolve

- 1 customer complaints. In evaluating the appropriateness of  
2 response time, management may consider periodic, high volume  
3 inquiries as a justifiable cause of delay.
- 4 (f) Develop customer satisfaction measures as part of  
5 the department's performance measurement system.
- 6 (g) Employ a system by which customer complaints and  
7 resolutions of those complaints are tracked.
- 8 (h) Provide statistical data on customer complaints  
9 and resolutions of those complaints, and on customer  
10 satisfaction measures in annual reports or other performance  
11 publications, and use this data when conducting management and  
12 budget planning activities.
- 13 (i) Provide training to employees on improving  
14 customer service and on the role of the department employee or  
15 employees designated to resolve customer complaints.
- 16 (j) Include in the departmental strategic plan a  
17 program outline or goal regarding customer service.
- 18 (k) Conduct interdepartmental discussions on methods  
19 of providing and improving customer service.
- 20 (5) OPERATING HOURS.--Departments shall be staffed and  
21 open to the public for business on all regular business days.
- 22 (6) FUNDING.--Departments shall use available  
23 resources to achieve the purposes of this section.
- 24 (7) FAILURE TO COMPLY.--No cause of action shall arise  
25 in favor of any person due to a department's failure to comply  
26 with any provision of this section.
- 27 (8) EXCEPTIONS.--This section does not apply to a  
28 person who uses or requests services or information from a  
29 department when such service or information is related to that  
30 person's:
- 31 (a) Criminal prosecution;

