

By the Committee on Comprehensive Planning, Local and Military Affairs; and Senator Laurent

316-2088-02

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to county emergency medical service assessments; creating s. 125.271, F.S.; defining the term "county" as used in this section; providing for permanent qualification for funding emergency medical services through a special assessment levied as described in this act; providing construction; providing for the ratification and validation of certain special assessments levied before the effective date of this act; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 125.271, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

125.271 Emergency medical services; county emergency medical service assessments.--

(1) As used in this section, the term "county" means:

(a) A county that is within a rural area of critical economic concern as designated by the Governor pursuant to s. 288.0656;

(b) A small county having a population of 75,000 or fewer on the effective date of this act which has levied at least 10 mills of ad valorem tax for the previous fiscal year;
or

(c) A county that adopted an ordinance authorizing the imposition of an assessment for emergency medical services prior to January 1, 2002.

1 Once a county has qualified under this subsection, it always
2 retains the qualification.

3 (2) A county may fund the costs of emergency medical
4 services through the levy of a special assessment that
5 apportions the cost among the property based on a reasonable
6 methodology that charges a parcel in proportion to its
7 benefits.

8 (3) The authorization provided in this section shall
9 be construed to be general law authorization pursuant to ss. 1
10 and 9 of Art. VII of the State Constitution.

11 (4) All special assessments for emergency medical
12 services levied by a county prior to the effective date of
13 this section are ratified and validated in all respects if
14 they would have been valid had this section been in effect at
15 the time they were levied; however, this subsection shall not
16 validate assessments in counties with litigation challenging
17 the validity of an assessment pending on January 1, 2002.

18 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
19 law.

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STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
SB 2178

This CS replaces the bill as filed, to create a new section of law to allow certain counties to levy a special assessment to fund Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Eligible counties include counties within a rural area of critical economic concern; a small county with a population of 75,000 or less on the effective date of this act that has levied at least 10 mills of ad valorem tax for the previous fiscal year; or a county which had adopted an ordinance authorizing the imposition of an assessment for EMS prior to January 1, 2002. The CS also ratifies special assessments for EMS levied by a county as authorized by the act prior to the effective date of the act; and includes language providing that the authorization pursuant to ss. 1 and 9 of Art. VII, of the State Constitution -- a tax authorized by general law. Finally, the CS includes a provision clarifying that this legislation will not validate assessments in counties with litigation challenging the validity of an assessment pending on January 1, 2002.