

By Senator Bennett

21-1285A-03

See HB

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to protection of manatees;  
3           amending s. 370.12, F.S.; providing that the  
4           proceeds of the Save the Manatee Trust Fund  
5           shall be used exclusively for funding law  
6           enforcement positions within the Fish and  
7           Wildlife Conservation Commission for  
8           enforcement of laws designed to protect manatee  
9           populations in certain counties; requiring an  
10          annual report; providing an effective date.

11  
12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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14           Section 1. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (4) of  
15 section 370.12, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

16           370.12 Marine animals; regulation.--

17           (4) ANNUAL FUNDING OF PROGRAMS FOR MARINE ANIMALS.--

18           (a) Each fiscal year the Save the Manatee Trust Fund  
19 shall be available to fund law enforcement positions within  
20 the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for the purpose  
21 of enforcing laws designed to protect manatee populations.  
22 Persons employed in such positions shall be assigned to  
23 perform their law enforcement duties in counties having the  
24 highest incidences of manatee deaths and injuries ~~an impartial~~  
25 ~~scientific benchmark census of the manatee population in the~~  
26 ~~state. Weather permitting, the study shall be conducted~~  
27 ~~annually by the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and~~  
28 ~~the results shall be made available to the President of the~~  
29 ~~Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the~~  
30 ~~Governor and Cabinet for use in the evaluation and development~~  
31 ~~of manatee protection measures. In addition, the Save the~~

1 ~~Manatee Trust Fund shall be available for annual funding of~~  
2 ~~activities of public and private organizations and those of~~  
3 ~~the commission intended to provide manatee and marine mammal~~  
4 ~~protection and recovery effort; manufacture and erection of~~  
5 ~~informational and regulatory signs; production, publication,~~  
6 ~~and distribution of educational materials; participation in~~  
7 ~~manatee and marine mammal research programs, including carcass~~  
8 ~~salvage and other programs; programs intended to assist the~~  
9 ~~recovery of the manatee as an endangered species, assist the~~  
10 ~~recovery of the endangered or threatened marine mammals, and~~  
11 ~~prevent the endangerment of other species of marine mammals;~~  
12 ~~and other similar programs intended to protect and enhance the~~  
13 ~~recovery of the manatee and other species of marine mammals.~~  
14 ~~The commission shall annually solicit advisory recommendations~~  
15 ~~from the Save the Manatee Committee affiliated with the Save~~  
16 ~~the Manatee Club, as identified and recognized in Executive~~  
17 ~~Order 85-19, on the use of funds from the Save the Manatee~~  
18 ~~Trust Fund.~~

19 (b) By December 1 each year, the Fish and Wildlife  
20 Conservation Commission shall provide the President of the  
21 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a  
22 written report, enumerating the amounts and purposes for which  
23 all proceeds in the Save the Manatee Trust Fund for the  
24 previous fiscal year are expended, ~~in a manner consistent with~~  
25 ~~those recovery tasks enumerated within the manatee recovery~~  
26 ~~plan as required by the Endangered Species Act.~~ Such report  
27 shall identify the number of additional law enforcement  
28 positions which were funded and shall provide a list of the  
29 counties to which the personnel were assigned.

30 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2003.  
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