

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to centers of excellence; creating s.
 3 1004.226, F.S.; defining the term "center of excellence";
 4 providing purposes and objectives of centers of
 5 excellence; creating the Emerging Technology Commission in
 6 the Executive Office of the Governor and providing
 7 membership thereof; providing duties of Florida Research
 8 Consortium, Inc., relating to review and reporting;
 9 requiring the commission to adopt criteria for evaluating
 10 proposals for establishing or expanding centers of
 11 excellence; providing requirements for such proposals;
 12 requiring submission of a recommended plan and approval of
 13 a final plan for establishing or expanding centers of
 14 excellence; requiring semiannual reporting; providing
 15 appropriations; providing an effective date.

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

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 19 Section 1. Section 1004.226, Florida Statutes, is created
 20 to read:

21 1004.226 Florida technology development; centers of
 22 excellence.--

23 (1) The term "center of excellence," as used in this
 24 section, means an organization of personnel, facilities, and
 25 equipment established at or in collaboration with one or more
 26 universities in Florida to accomplish the purposes and
 27 objectives set forth in this section. The purposes and
 28 objectives of a center of excellence include:

29 (a) Identifying and pursuing opportunities for university
30 scholars, research center scientists and engineers, and private
31 businesses to form collaborative partnerships to foster and
32 promote the research required to develop commercially promising,
33 advanced, and innovative technologies and to transfer those
34 technologies to commercial sectors.

35 (b) Acquiring and leveraging public and private sector
36 funding to provide the totality of funds, personnel, facilities,
37 equipment, and other resources needed to support the research
38 required to develop commercially promising, advanced, and
39 innovative technologies and to transfer those technologies to
40 commercial sectors.

41 (c) Recruiting and retaining world class scholars, high-
42 performing students, and leading scientists and engineers in
43 technology disciplines to engage in research in this state to
44 develop commercially promising, advanced, and innovative
45 technologies.

46 (d) Enhancing and expanding technology curricula and
47 laboratory resources at universities and research centers in
48 this state.

49 (e) Increasing the number of high-performing students in
50 technology disciplines who graduate from universities in this
51 state and pursue careers in this state.

52 (f) Stimulating and supporting the inception, growth, and
53 diversification of technology-based businesses and ventures in
54 Florida and increasing employment opportunities for the
55 workforce needed to support such businesses.

56 (2) The Emerging Technology Commission, or "commission,"
57 is created within the Executive Office of the Governor to guide
58 the establishment of centers of excellence.

59 (a) The commission shall consist of five regular members
60 appointed by the Governor, one of whom the Governor shall
61 appoint as chair of the commission; two regular members
62 appointed by the President of the Senate; two regular members
63 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; the
64 Chancellor of the Division of Colleges and Universities as an ex
65 officio nonvoting member; and, as ex officio nonvoting members,
66 the member of the Senate and the member of the House of
67 Representatives who serve as members of Florida Research
68 Consortium, Inc. The regular members shall be business leaders,
69 industrial researchers, academic researchers, scientists, or
70 engineers who have been recognized as leaders in the state's
71 emerging and advanced technology sectors. A regular member of
72 the commission may not serve for more than 4 years. Any vacancy
73 that occurs during the term of a regular member of the
74 commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original
75 appointment.

76 (b) Members of the commission shall serve without
77 compensation but shall be entitled to receive per diem and
78 travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061 while in
79 performance of their duties.

80 (c) The Executive Office of the Governor shall provide
81 staff support for the activities of the commission and per diem
82 and travel expenses for commission members.

83 (3) Florida Research Consortium, Inc., shall review the
84 report submitted to the Emerging Technology Commission under
85 former s. 1004.225 and revise the factors contributing to the
86 success of a center of excellence as the consortium considers
87 necessary. By August 1, 2005, the consortium shall submit a
88 revised report to the commission.

89 (a) In reviewing the report and revising the factors, the
90 consortium shall, at a minimum, consider activities and progress
91 related to the establishment of the centers of excellence
92 designated under former s. 1004.225.

93 (b) The consortium shall ensure that the revised report
94 addresses factors contributing to the success of an expansion of
95 a center of excellence designated under former s. 1004.225.

96 (4)(a) By September 1, 2005, the Emerging Technology
97 Commission shall develop and approve criteria for evaluating
98 proposals for establishing or expanding one or more centers of
99 excellence under this section. The commission shall consider the
100 criteria developed under former s. 1004.225 and the revised
101 report submitted by Florida Research Consortium, Inc., under
102 subsection (3). The commission shall hold at least one public
103 hearing, at a time and location designated by the chair of the
104 commission, for the purpose of receiving expert testimony on the
105 evaluation criteria.

106 (b) By September 15, 2005, the commission shall provide a
107 list of the approved criteria to each university in the state
108 and to the State Technology Office for publishing on the
109 Internet within 24 hours after the office's receipt of the list.

110 (5)(a) Concurrent with the provision of the list of
111 criteria under subsection (4), the Emerging Technology
112 Commission shall notify each university in the state, in
113 writing, of the opportunity to submit to the commission a
114 written proposal for establishing a center of excellence under
115 this section or expanding a center of excellence designated
116 under former s. 1004.225. This section does not prevent a
117 university that is the site of a center of excellence designated
118 under former s. 1004.225 from submitting a proposal to establish
119 a new center of excellence or to expand the existing center of
120 excellence designated under former s. 1004.225.

121 (b) A proposal from a university must be submitted to the
122 commission before November 1, 2005.

123 (c) A proposal must specifically address the evaluation
124 criteria developed by the commission and specify how funding
125 would be used to establish or expand a center of excellence.

126 (6) By January 1, 2006, the Emerging Technology Commission
127 shall submit to the Board of Governors a recommended plan for
128 establishing or expanding one or more centers of excellence
129 under this section. The recommended plan must specifically
130 address the evaluation criteria developed by the commission and
131 specify how funding would be used to establish or expand each
132 center of excellence. When developing the recommended plan, the
133 commission shall consider the proposals submitted under this
134 section and hold at least two public hearings, at times and
135 locations designated by the chair of the commission, for the
136 purpose of receiving expert testimony, including, but not
137 limited to, viewing presentations of university proposals.

138 (7)(a) By February 15, 2006, the Board of Governors shall
139 develop and approve a final plan for establishing or expanding
140 one or more centers of excellence under this section and shall
141 authorize expenditures for implementing the plan. The final plan
142 approved by the Board of Governors for the establishment or
143 expansion of one or more centers of excellence must allocate at
144 least \$10 million to each center of excellence established or
145 expanded under the plan.

146 (b) The final plan may provide for:

147 1. Designating one or more centers of excellence, which
148 shall be in addition to any centers of excellence designated
149 under former s. 1004.225;

150 2. Expanding one or more of the centers of excellence
151 designated under former s. 1004.225; or

152 3. Designating one or more new centers of excellence and
153 expanding one or more of the centers of excellence designated
154 under former s. 1004.225.

155 (c) The final plan must include performance and
156 accountability measures that can be used to assess the progress
157 of plan implementation and the success of each center of
158 excellence that receives funding under the final plan. By March
159 1, 2006, the Board of Governors shall provide a copy of the
160 final plan to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
161 Speaker of the House of Representatives.

162 (8) Beginning July 1, 2006, the Emerging Technology
163 Commission shall report semiannually, in writing, to the
164 Commissioner of Education on the progress in implementing the

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165 final plan approved under subsection (7) and the success of each
166 center of excellence that receives funding under that plan.

167 Section 2. The sum of \$50,000 is appropriated from the
168 General Revenue Fund to the Executive Office of the Governor for
169 fiscal year 2005-2006 for the purpose of providing staff and
170 administrative support to the Emerging Technology Commission,
171 created under s. 1004.226, Florida Statutes, and per diem and
172 travel expenses for commission members or for Florida Research
173 Consortium, Inc., members and staff while completing the tasks
174 specified in s. 1004.226(3), Florida Statutes.

175 Section 3. The sum of \$50 million is appropriated from the
176 General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education for fiscal
177 year 2005-2006 for the purpose of establishing one or more
178 additional centers of excellence or expanding one or more
179 existing centers of excellence pursuant to s. 1004.226, Florida
180 Statutes.

181 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.