

By Senator Fasano

11-943-05

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to the Florida Clean Energy  
Technology Center for Excellence; requiring the  
Florida Energy Office in the Department of  
Environmental Protection to contract with the  
Florida Technological Research and Development  
Authority to operate the Florida Clean Energy  
Technology Center of Excellence; providing for  
administration by the center of a grant program  
to support businesses developing a product or  
service related to energy; providing for  
responsibilities of the center relating to a  
Florida Hydrogen Capabilities Catalog, an  
annual venture forum, and the promotion of  
alternative energy technologies; requiring  
conformance with the powers granted to the  
authority; providing an appropriation;  
providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. The Florida Clean Energy Technology Center  
of Excellence.--The Florida Energy Office in the Department of  
Environmental Protection shall enter into a contract with the  
Florida Technological Research and Development Authority,  
whereby such authority shall operate the Florida Clean Energy  
Technology Center of Excellence to perform the following  
responsibilities in a manner that is consistent with the  
powers granted to such authority under chapter 87-455, Laws of  
Florida:

1           (1) Administer the Venture Smart Grant Program. The  
2 Venture Smart Grant Program shall award grants of up to  
3 \$50,000 to one or more businesses that are developing a  
4 product or service related to energy. The grants awarded shall  
5 provide a recipient business with the guidance and technical  
6 support necessary to attract and secure investment in such  
7 product or service. The guidance and support provided may  
8 include prototype development, management-team recruitment,  
9 intellectual property protection, or business and  
10 marketing-plan development. To receive a grant, a business  
11 must be developing an energy product or service for the  
12 marketplace, be a start-up or medium-sized business, submit a  
13 grant application, and be selected for funding by the board of  
14 directors of the authority. The board's selection shall be  
15 made after the board considers the recommendations of a  
16 three-member review committee that is independent of the  
17 authority. The independent review committee shall make its  
18 recommendations to the board following the committee's review  
19 of the applications that the business development managers of  
20 the Venture Smart Grant Program at the authority have  
21 identified as the best prospects. The managers shall make such  
22 identification by screening the applicant companies in order  
23 to select the products and services that are the most  
24 promising.

25           (2) Create and maintain a Florida Hydrogen  
26 Capabilities Catalog on the Internet. Such catalog shall  
27 provide a web-based list of the hydrogen-related research  
28 projects that are underway at the state's public and private  
29 universities, the businesses in the state which are involved  
30 in the development and commercialization of hydrogen energy  
31 technologies, and the opportunities for state or federal

1 grants to support development and commercialization of  
2 hydrogen energy technologies.

3 (3) Sponsor and organize an annual clean energy  
4 venture forum to bring venture capital to promising companies  
5 having clean energy innovations.

6 (4) Enhance the energy security of this state and the  
7 nation by reducing dependence on foreign oil as an energy  
8 source by promoting the research, development, demonstration,  
9 and deployment of clean energy technologies, particularly  
10 renewable technologies, through the provision of traditional  
11 business-incubation services and the administration of the  
12 Venture Smart Grant Program as a member of the National  
13 Alliance of Clean Energy Business Incubators, a group that was  
14 created in 2002 by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory of  
15 the United States Department of Energy to assist entrepreneurs  
16 in commercializing clean energy technologies.

17 Section 2. The sum of \$400,000 is appropriated from  
18 the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Energy Office in the  
19 Department of Environmental Protection for the purpose of  
20 funding the Florida Clean Energy Technology Center of  
21 Excellence at the Florida Technological Research and  
22 Development Authority.

23 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.  
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SENATE SUMMARY

Directs the Florida Energy Office in the Department of Environmental Protection to contract with the Florida Technological Research and Development Authority to operate the Florida Clean Energy Technology Center of Excellence. Provides for administration by the center of a grant program to support businesses developing a product or service related to energy. Provides for responsibilities of the center relating to a Florida Hydrogen Capabilities Catalog; an annual venture forum; and the promotion of research, development, demonstration, and deployment of alternative energy technologies. Requires conformance with the powers granted to the authority.