

By Senator Crist

12-1394-05

See HB 455

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Florida Faith-Based Initiative; establishing the Florida Faith-Based Initiative; creating the Florida Families Faith-Based Institute and providing for administration by the University of South Florida; providing a definition; providing duties; prohibiting imposition of fees for certain purposes; requiring a report; providing for open records and meetings; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Florida Faith-Based Initiative.--

(1) CREATION.--The Florida Families Faith-Based Institute is created at and shall be administered by the University of South Florida. The Legislature determines that public policy dictates that the Florida Families Faith-Based Institute operate in the most open and accessible manner consistent with its public purpose. To this end, the Legislature specifically declares that the Florida Families Faith-Based Institute is subject to the provisions of chapter 119, Florida Statutes, relating to public records and those provisions of chapter 286, Florida Statutes, relating to public meetings and records.

(2) DEFINITION.--"Faith-based organization" means an organization that is owned by, operated by, or affiliated with a religious entity and whose primary purpose is providing social services and assistance to individuals in need of its

1 services, without regard to the race or religion of the person
2 in need of such services.

3 (3) DUTIES.--The Florida Families Faith-Based
4 Institute shall:

5 (a) Examine barriers to state-funded or federally
6 funded provision of services by faith-based organizations.

7 (b) Provide programmatic and managerial training and
8 technical assistance to faith-based organizations seeking or
9 using state or federal funds to provide services. Such
10 training and technical assistance shall focus on critical
11 areas of faith-based social services management, including
12 community asset-based program development, research-based
13 "best program practices," resource development for nonstate
14 funding sources, and financial management and budgeting.

15 (c) Establish a statewide resource center and
16 clearinghouse for information related to technical assistance
17 and training resources for faith-based and community-based
18 organizations.

19 (d) Serve, as required, as a fiscal intermediary for
20 faith-based and community-based organizations receiving state
21 funding.

22 (e) To the maximum extent possible, leverage state
23 funding for the initiative with any federal funding that the
24 initiative may receive to support similar faith-based
25 activities.

26 (f) Provide specific goals and objective criteria to
27 measure, evaluate, and document the quality and cost of
28 services provided by faith-based organizations with state or
29 federal funds.

30 (g) Serve as liaison to the Centers for Faith-Based
31 and Community Initiatives established within the United States

1 Department of Justice, United States Department of Health and
2 Human Services, United States Department of Education, United
3 States Department of Labor, and United States Department of
4 Housing and Urban Development to work in tandem with the White
5 House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

6
7 The Florida Families Faith-Based Institute shall perform its
8 duties without imposing fees on faith-based organizations
9 receiving its assistance.

10 (4) REPORT.--By January 1 of each year, the institute
11 shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and
12 the Speaker of the House of Representatives an annual report
13 that shall describe the activities of the institute in
14 fulfilling its duties, describe expenditures of funds by the
15 institute, and recommend to the President of the Senate and
16 the Speaker of the House of Representatives changes to the
17 Florida Statutes necessary to fulfill its purposes and duties.

18 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.
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