

HB 0455

2005

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to the Florida Faith-Based Initiative;  
 3           establishing the Florida Faith-Based Initiative; creating  
 4           the Florida Families Faith-Based Institute and providing  
 5           for administration by the University of South Florida;  
 6           providing a definition; providing duties; prohibiting  
 7           imposition of fees for certain purposes; requiring a  
 8           report; providing for open records and meetings; providing  
 9           an effective date.

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

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13           Section 1. Florida Faith-Based Initiative.--

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

24           (2) DEFINITION.--"Faith-based organization" means an  
 25 organization that is owned by, operated by, or affiliated with a  
 26 religious entity and whose primary purpose is providing social  
 27 services and assistance to individuals in need of its services,  
 28 without regard to the race or religion of the person in need of  
 29 such services.

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

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

34 (b) Provide programmatic and managerial training and  
 35 technical assistance to faith-based organizations seeking or  
 36 using state or federal funds to provide services. Such training  
 37 and technical assistance shall focus on critical areas of faith-  
 38 based social services management, including community asset-  
 39 based program development, research-based "best program  
 40 practices," resource development for nonstate funding sources,  
 41 and financial management and budgeting.

42 (c) Establish a statewide resource center and  
 43 clearinghouse for information related to technical assistance  
 44 and training resources for faith-based and community-based  
 45 organizations.

46 (d) Serve, as required, as a fiscal intermediary for  
 47 faith-based and community-based organizations receiving state  
 48 funding.

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

52 (f) Provide specific goals and objective criteria to  
 53 measure, evaluate, and document the quality and cost of services  
 54 provided by faith-based organizations with state or federal  
 55 funds.

56 (g) Serve as liaison to the Centers for Faith-Based and  
 57 Community Initiatives established within the United States  
 58 Department of Justice, United States Department of Health and

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59 Human Services, United States Department of Education, United  
60 States Department of Labor, and United States Department of  
61 Housing and Urban Development to work in tandem with the White  
62 House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

63  
64 The Florida Families Faith-Based Institute shall perform its  
65 duties without imposing fees on faith-based organizations  
66 receiving its assistance.

67 (4) REPORT.--By January 1 of each year, the institute  
68 shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and  
69 the Speaker of the House of Representatives an annual report  
70 that shall describe the activities of the institute in  
71 fulfilling its duties, describe expenditures of funds by the  
72 institute, and recommend to the President of the Senate and the  
73 Speaker of the House of Representatives changes to the Florida  
74 Statutes necessary to fulfill its purposes and duties.

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