

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Regulated Industries Committee

BILL: CS/CS/SB 632

SPONSOR: Regulated Industries Committee, Community Affairs Committee, and Senators Bennett and King

SUBJECT: Prompt Payment for Construction Services

DATE: April 19, 2005

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>McKay</u>	<u>Wilson</u>	<u>GO</u>	<u>Fav/3 amendments</u>
2.	<u>Vickers</u>	<u>Yeatman</u>	<u>CA</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
3.	<u>Sumner</u>	<u>Imhof</u>	<u>RI</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
4.	_____	_____	<u>GA</u>	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This committee substitute for committee substitute (CS for CS) revises provisions relating to prompt payment for construction services; redesignates part VII of chapter 218 F.S., as the "Local Government Prompt Payment Act," rather than the "Florida Prompt Payment Act"; creates the "Florida Prompt Payment Act" to apply to state projects; and provides procedures for payment of retainage and for settling disputes relating thereto.

This CS for CS amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 95.11, 218.70, 218.72, 218.735, 255.05, 255.071, and 287.0585. This CS for CS creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 255.0705, 255.072, 255.073, 255.074, 255.075, 255.076, 255.077, and 255.078.

II. Present Situation:

Prompt Payment of Vendors by State Agencies

Section 215.422, F.S., addresses prompt payment of vendors by state agencies and the judicial branch. Vouchers authorizing payment of an invoice must be filed with the Comptroller not later than 20 days after receipt of the invoice. The Comptroller is required to issue a warrant in payment of the invoice, not later than 10 days after filing the voucher. Partial payments to contractors are authorized.

Section 215.422(3)(b), F.S., specifies that disputes over payments between the state agency and vendors are to be resolved in accordance with rules developed and adopted by the Chief Justice for the judicial branch, and rules adopted by the Department of Financial Services or in a formal administrative proceeding before an administrative law judge of the Division of Administrative Hearings for state agencies.

Section 255.071, F.S., addresses disputes between contractors and subcontractors and suppliers for public works projects. When the contractor receives payments from the state or “any county, city, or political subdivision of the state, or other public authority...” for the construction of a public building, they are required to pay, in accordance with the contract terms, the undisputed contract obligations for labor, services, or materials provided for the project. If the contractor fails to pay these undisputed obligations to the subcontractor or supplier within 30 days of the required payment date, the subcontractor or supplier is entitled to the procedures and remedies provided in subsections (3) and (4).

Florida Prompt Payment Act

Part VII of chapter 218, F.S., known as the “Florida Prompt Payment Act,” was enacted in 1989 to provide for prompt payments by local governmental entities to private vendors.

Section 218.72(2), F.S., defines the term local governmental entity to mean, “a county or municipal government, school board, school district, authority, special taxing district, other political subdivision, or any office, board, bureau, commission, department, branch, division, or institution thereof or any project supported by county or municipal funds.” The act does not apply to community colleges.

Section 218.73, F.S., provides that payments for non-construction services by a local governmental entity must be calculated from the date on which a proper invoice is received by the chief disbursement officer of the local governmental entity after approval by the governing body, if required; or if a proper invoice is not received by the local governmental entity, the latter date of:

- On which delivery of personal property is accepted by the local governmental entity;
- On which services are completed;
- On which the rental period begins; or
- On which the local governmental entity and vendor agree in a contract that provides dates relative to payment periods.

Section 218.735, F.S., specifies the due-dates for payment of construction services. Subsection (5) requires that if a local governmental entity disputes a portion of a payment request or an invoice, the undisputed portion must be paid timely, in accordance with the requirements of subsection (1). Subsection (6) requires that when a contractor receives payment from a local governmental entity for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the contractor, the contractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 15 days after the contractor's receipt of payment. Similarly, when a subcontractor receives payment from a contractor for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the subcontractor, the subcontractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 15 days after the subcontractor's receipt of payment.

Subsection (7) specifies that all payments due under this section and not made within the specified time shall bear interest at the rate of 1 percent per month, or the rate specified by contract, whichever is greater.

Section 218.74, F.S., requires each local governmental entity to establish procedures to mark each payment request or invoice as received on the date on which it is delivered to the local government.

Section 218.75, F.S., provides that no contract between a local government entity and a vendor¹ may prohibit the vendor from invoicing the local government entity for interest allowable under ch. 218, part VII, F.S.

Section 218.76, F.S., outlines a process for the resolution of disputes between local government entities and vendors over payment. In any case in which an improper payment request or invoice is submitted by a vendor, the local governmental entity has 10 days after the improper payment request or invoice is received to notify the vendor that the payment request or invoice is improper and indicate what corrective action on the part of the vendor is needed to make the payment request or invoice proper.

Subsection (2) governs disputes between a vendor and a local governmental entity over payment of a payment request or invoice. Each local governmental entity is required to establish a dispute resolution procedure to be followed in cases of such disputes. Such procedure must provide that proceedings to resolve the dispute be commenced not later than 45 days after the date on which the proper payment request or invoice was received by the local governmental entity and be concluded by final decision of the local governmental entity not later than 60 days after the date on which the proper payment request or invoice was received. Such procedures are not subject to ch. 120, F.S. If the dispute is resolved in favor of the local governmental entity, then interest charges begin to accrue 15 days after the local governmental entity's final decision. If the dispute is resolved in favor of the vendor, interest begins to accrue as of the original date the payment became due.

Subsection (3) provides that the prevailing party in a collection action under the prompt payment act is entitled to recover court costs and reasonable attorney's fees under certain circumstances.

Retainage on Construction Projects²

“Retainage” is a common construction contracting practice whereby a certain percentage of compensation is withheld by the project owner from the general contractor and, in turn, by the general contractor from subcontractors until the project is completed satisfactorily. Retainage is established by contract between the prime-builder and the entity contracting for the project. Proponents of this practice claim it is necessary as leverage to assure timely completion of construction projects. Opponents of retainage claim that payment procedures on large public projects can be lengthy and complex and that final payment to the subcontractors can be delayed for months when problems with one aspect of the project remain unresolved.

Florida's subcontractors, who claim that retainage often creates undue financial hardships, asked the 2000 Legislature to consider limiting the allowable percentage of compensation that could be

¹ “Vendor” is defined as a person who sells goods or services, sells or leases personal property, or leases real property to a local government entity. See s. 218.71(6), F.S.

² This information is taken from OPPAGA *Special Review: Inflexibility in Contracting and Retainage Practices Could Hurt Construction Industry*, Report No. 00-26, December 2000.

retained. In response, the Legislature requested the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to evaluate retainage and other construction practices identified by subcontractors.

The OPPAGA determined that limiting retainage may have the harmful unintended side effect of thwarting the development of new business or retarding the growth of existing businesses. In addition, owners and prime contractors may use other means to minimize risk, which may be less favorable than retainage.

The OPPAGA found that the fiscal impact of retainage on subcontractors can be lessened through the payment of interest on their percentage of compensation that has been retained. Although the Legislature could require payment of interest by law, ideally, this would be negotiated as part of the contracting process. The OPPAGA suggested that consideration of such legislation should take into account the fiscal impact to the state of Florida and other units of government.

The OPPAGA also recommended the Department of Management Services identify and disseminate best construction practices that, if implemented, would facilitate final project completion and release of retainage.

Industry representatives report that Florida is one of only seven states that have no laws regulating retainage. Payment procedures on large public projects can be lengthy and complex, and in particular, final payment can be delayed for months for even one small problem that remains unresolved.

Bonds of Contractors on Public Buildings

In Florida, “surety insurance” is defined to include payment and performance bonds.³ Such bonds are contracts in which a surety company, which is paid a premium by a principal, e.g., a general contractor, agrees to stand in the place of the principal in the event the principal defaults either as to performance of the contract or as to payment of its subcontractors/suppliers.⁴

Chapter 255, F.S., deals with public property and publicly owned buildings. Section 255.05, F.S., requires a payment and performance bond from any person who enters into a formal contract with the state or any local government, or other public authority, for the construction of a public building, for the prosecution and completion of a public work, or for repairs upon a public building or public work.

Section 255.05(2), F.S., provides procedures for subcontractors and suppliers to make claims against a payment bond. This section also provides an outline for a notice form, deadlines for action, and consequences for improper notice or failure to act within specified guidelines.

³ Section 624.606(1), F.S.

⁴ *Surety Bonds: A Basic User's Guide for Payment Bond Claimants and Obligees*, Construction Lawyer, Daniel Toomey and Tamara McNulty, Winter, 2002.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This CS for CS revises and redesignates the "Florida Prompt Payment Act" as the "Local Government Prompt Payment Act," and creates the "Florida Prompt Payment Act" to apply to the state. In addition, it provides procedures for payment of retainage and for settling disputes relating to these acts.

Section 1 redesignates part VII of ch. 218, F.S., as the "Local Government Prompt Payment Act," rather than the "Florida Prompt Payment Act." The Florida Prompt Payment Act is reestablished in sections 4-12 of this CS, and applies primarily to state government.

Section 2 amends s. 218.72, F.S., by deleting from the definition of "local governmental entity" "any project supported by county or municipal funds." The definition of the term "vendor" is amended to include "any person who provides waste-hauling services to residents or businesses located within the boundaries of a local government pursuant to a contract or local ordinance." The definition of "construction services" is amended to make the prompt payment provisions in this act available to any contractors performing construction services, not only those that are licensed under parts I and II of chapter 489.⁵ A definition of the term "contractor" or "provider of construction services" is also created. These terms mean "any person who contracts directly with a local governmental entity to provide construction services." The term contractor replaces the term "vender" used throughout this part of ch. 218, F.S.

Section 3 amends s. 218.735(6), F.S., to require that when a contractor receives payment from a local governmental entity for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the contractor, the contractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 10 days, rather than 15 days as provided in current law, after the contractor's receipt of payment. However, the subcontractors have 7 days, rather than 15 days as provided in current law, to pay their subcontractors and suppliers.

This section also creates a new subsection (7) to require each contract for construction services between a local government entity and a contractor to provide for the development and review of a "punch list," or list of items required to "render complete, satisfactory, and acceptable the construction services purchased" For construction projects costing less than \$10 million, the list must be completed within 30 calendar days after reaching substantial completion as defined in the contract, or, if not defined in the contract, upon reaching beneficial occupancy or use. For construction projects costing \$10 million or more, the list must be completed within 30 calendar days, unless extended up to 60 days by contract, after reaching substantial completion as defined in the contract, or, if not defined in the contract, upon reaching beneficial occupancy or use.

The list and time frame requirements also apply to construction contracts relating to construction services on more than one building or structure, or involving a multiphased project.

⁵ Parts I and II of chapter 489, F.S., address regulation of construction contracting and electrical and alarm system contracting.

Paragraph (7)(c) specifies that failure to include any corrective work or pending items not yet completed on the list does not alter the responsibility of the vendor to complete all the purchased construction services as specified in the contract.

Paragraph (7)(d) provides that the contractor may submit a payment request for the appropriate amount of retainage upon completion of all items on the list. In a good-faith dispute relating to the list, the local government is authorized to withhold up to 150 percent of the total costs to complete any incomplete items on the list.

Paragraphs (7)(e), (f), and (g) provide for the following, respectively:

- All items that require correction under the contract and that are identified after the preparation and delivery of the list remain the obligation of the contractor as defined in the contract.
- Warranty items may not affect the final payment of retainage.
- Local governments or contractors are prohibited from holding retainage to secure payment of insurance premiums under a consolidated insurance program or series of insurance policies issued to a public agency or a contractor for a project or group of projects, and the final payment of retainage may not be delayed pending a final audit by the local governmental entity's or contractor's insurance provider.

Paragraph (7)(h) provides that if a local government fails to timely develop the required punch list, the contractor may submit a payment request for the appropriate amount of retainage. The local government is not required to pay the requested retainage if the contractor has, in whole or part, failed to cooperate with the local government in development of the list; failed to perform its contractual responsibilities, if any, with regard to the development of the list; or if paragraph (8)(f) applies, which relates to disputes between the local government and the contractor.

Subsection (8) is created to provide for interim release of retainage. At the start of a construction project until 50 percent of the project has been completed, a local governmental entity may not withhold as retainage more than 10 percent of each progress payment to the contractor. After reaching 50-percent completion, the local government may withhold as retainage no more than 5 percent of future progress payments to the contractor. The term "50-percent completion" means as defined in the contract, or, if not defined in the contract, the point at which the local government has expended 50 percent of the total cost of the construction services purchased as identified in the contract, plus all change orders and other additions or modifications as provided in the contract.

However, a municipality with a population of 25,000 or fewer, or a county with a population of 100,000 or fewer, may withhold as retainage up to 10 percent of each progress payment until final completion and acceptance of the project by the local government.

Paragraph 8(c) provides that after 50 percent completion of the project, the contractor may withhold retainage from its subcontractors at a rate higher than 5 percent.

Paragraph 8(d) specifies that after reaching 50 percent completion, the contractor may submit a payment request for up to one-half of the retainage amount held by the local government. The

local governmental entity must promptly pay the contractor, unless there is a “good-faith” dispute between the contractor and the local government. If the local government pays retainage to the contractor, the contractor must timely remit payment of such retainage to the appropriate subcontractors and suppliers. However, under specified conditions and with proper notice, the contractor may withhold more than 5 percent retainage from payments to its subcontractors.

Paragraph (8)(e) clarifies that the local government may withhold retainage at a rate lower than 10 percent and may release the appropriated retainage to the contractor; the contractor is subsequently responsible for remitting such retainage to the subcontractors and suppliers.

Paragraphs (8)(f) and (g) specify that this section does not require the payment or release of amounts that are the subject of a good-faith dispute, the subject of a claim brought pursuant to s. 255.05, F.S.,⁶ or otherwise the subject of another claim or demand, and reiterates that the time limitations set forth in this section apply to any payment request for retainage pursuant to subsection (8).

Paragraph (8)(h) provides that paragraphs (8)(a) through (8)(d) do not apply to any local government construction project that is funded, in whole or in part, with federal moneys and is subject to federal grantor laws and regulations or requirements that are contrary to any provision of the Local Government Prompt Payment Act.

Finally, paragraph (8)(i) provides that the section does not apply to any construction services costing \$200,000 or less.

Section 4 creates s. 255.0705, F.S., to establish the new "Florida Prompt Payment Act." This new provision of law pertains primarily to state government or projects supported by state funds. Provisions in this act correspond to the current Florida Prompt Payment Act in ss. 218.70-218.76, F.S., which is renamed in section 1 as the Local Government Prompt Payment Act, and other provisions added in this act relate to retainage.

Section 5 amends ss. 255.071(2) and (3), F.S., to address payment of subcontractors, sub-subcontractors, materialmen, and suppliers on construction contracts for public projects. Subsection (2) currently provides that failure to pay any undisputed obligations for labor, services, or materials within 30 days such labor, services, or materials were furnished and payment became due, or within 30 days after the date payment is received, whichever last occurs, entitles the person providing such labor, services, or materials to the procedures for settling disputes and remedies specified in subsections (3) and (4). The second deadline is changed, by reference, from 30 days to 10 days for contractors, and 7 days for subcontractors.

Subsection (3) provides procedures for settling disputes between contractors and subcontractors and suppliers. Any person providing labor, services, or materials for the construction of a public building, for the prosecution and completion of a public work, or for repairs upon a public building or public work improvements to real property, may file a verified complaint alleging, among other things, that the person against whom the complaint was filed has received payment on account of the labor, services, or materials described in the complaint more than 30 days prior

⁶ See section 13 of this bill.

to the date the complaint was filed. This deadline is changed, by reference, from 30 to 10 days for contractors, and 7 days for subcontractors.

Section 6 creates s. 255.072, F.S., to provide definitions for the “Florida Prompt Payment Act.” Some definitions are adapted from the definitions in s. 218.735, F.S., the current Florida Prompt Payment Act. Subsection (1) defines “agent” as a project architect or engineer, or any other person acting on behalf of a public entity. Subsection (2) specifies that the definition of “construction services” does not include contracts or work performed for the Department of Transportation. Subsection (3) defines contractor as “any person who contracts directly with a public entity to provide construction services.” Subsection (5) defines “public entity” as the state, or any office, board, bureau, commission, department, branch, division, or institution thereof.

Section 7 creates s. 255.073, F.S., to address timely payment for purchases of construction services. This section is, with minor changes, adapted from s. 218.735, F.S., a provision in the current Florida Prompt Payment Act. In this section, the term “public entity” is substituted for “local government entity.” In addition, the deadline for remitting payments to subcontractors is 10 days (and 7 days for subcontractors to subcontractors and suppliers), rather than 15 days as specified in the current Florida Prompt Payment Act.

Subsection (1) states this version of the Florida Prompt Payment Act governs the timely payment for construction services by a public entity, except as otherwise provided in s. 215.422, F.S., which addresses prompt payment of contractors and suppliers by state agencies or the judicial branch.

Subsection (2) provides that if a public entity disputes a portion of a payment request, the undisputed portion must be timely paid.

Subsection (3) requires that when a contractor receives payment from a public entity for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the contractor, the contractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 10 days after the contractor's receipt of payment. Similarly, when a subcontractor receives payment from a contractor for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the subcontractor, the subcontractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 7 days after the subcontractor's receipt of payment.

Subsection (4) specifies that all payments due under this section and not made within the time periods specified by this section shall bear interest at the rate specified in s. 215.422, F.S.⁷ This subsection further specifies that after July 1, 2006, such payments shall bear interest at the rate of 1 percent per month, to the extent that the Chief Financial Officer's replacement project for the state's accounting and cash management systems (Project Aspire) is operational for the particular affected agency. After July 1, 2007, payments due from a public entity will bear interest at the rate of 1 percent per month.

Section 8 creates s. 255.074, F.S., to address procedures for calculation of payment due dates.

⁷ Section 215.422(3)(b), F.S., refers to the rate established pursuant to s. 55.03(1), F.S.

This section is adapted from s. 218.74, F.S., a provision in the current Florida Prompt Payment Act. In this section, the term “public entity” is substituted for “local government entity.”

Subsection (1) requires each public entity to establish procedures to mark each payment request or invoice as received on the date on which it is delivered to the public entity. Subsection (2) specifies that if the terms under which a purchase is made allow for partial deliveries, and a payment request or proper invoice is submitted for a partial delivery, the time for payment for the partial delivery must be calculated from the time of the partial delivery and the submission of the payment request. Subsection (3) differs from the current Florida Prompt Payment Act in that the public entity must submit a payment request to the Chief Financial Officer for payment no more than 20 days after receipt of the payment request.

Section 9 creates s. 255.075, F.S., to specify that a contract between a public entity and a contractor may not prohibit the collection of late payment interest charges allowable under s. 255.073(4), F.S. This section is, with minor changes, adapted from s. 218.75, F.S., a provision in the current Florida Prompt Payment Act.

Section 10 creates s. 255.076, F.S., to address court costs and attorney’s fees in court actions resulting from disputes over payment requests. This section adapts one portion of s. 218.76, F.S., a provision in the current Florida Prompt Payment Act, and provides that the prevailing party in a collection action under the prompt payment act is entitled to recover court costs and reasonable attorney’s fees under certain circumstances. Section 10 adapts neither the notice of improper payment request provision nor the dispute resolution process provision of the current Florida Prompt Payment Act.

Section 11 creates s. 255.077, F.S., to require each contract for construction services between a public entity and a contractor to provide for the development and review of a “punch list,” or list of items required to “render complete, satisfactory, and acceptable the construction services purchased . . .” For construction projects costing less than \$10 million, the list must be completed within 30 calendar days after reaching substantial completion as defined in the contract, or if not defined in the contract, upon reaching beneficial occupancy or use. For construction projects costing \$10 million or more, the list must be completed within 30 calendar days, unless extended up to 60 days by contract, after reaching substantial completion as defined in the contract, or if not defined in the contract, upon reaching beneficial occupancy or use.

Subsection (2) specifies that the list and time frame requirements also apply to construction contracts relating to construction services on more than one building or structure, or involving a multi-phased project.

Subsection (3) specifies that failure to include any corrective work or pending items not yet completed on the list does not alter the responsibility of the vendor to complete all the purchased construction services as specified in the contract.

Subsection (4) provides that when all items on the final punch list are completed, the contractor may submit a payment request for the appropriate amount of retainage. The public entity is then responsible to pay the requested retainage. However, the public entity may withhold up to

150 percent of the cost to complete any incomplete final punch list items if there is a good-faith dispute relating to the list.

Subsections (5), (6), and (7) provide for the following, respectively:

- All items that require correction under the contract and that are identified after the preparation and delivery of the list remain the obligation of the contractor as defined in the contract.
- Warranty items may not affect the final payment of retainage.
- Public entities or contractors are prohibited from holding retainage to secure payment of insurance premiums under a consolidated insurance program or series of insurance policies issued to a public agency or a contractor for a project or group of projects, and the final payment of retainage may not be delayed pending a final audit by the public entity's or contractor's insurance provider.

Subsection (8) provides that if a public entity fails to timely develop the required punch list, the contractor may submit a payment request for the appropriate amount of retainage. The public entity is not required to pay the requested retainage if the contractor has, in whole or part, failed to cooperate with the local government in development of the list or failed to perform its contractual responsibilities, if any, with regard to the development of the list or if a good-faith dispute exists between the public entity and the contractor.

Section 12 creates s. 255.078, F.S., to provide for public construction retainage. At the start of a construction project until 50 percent of the project has been completed, a public entity may not withhold as retainage more than 10 percent of each progress payment to the contractor. After reaching 50-percent completion, the public entity may withhold as retainage no more than 5 percent of future progress payments to the contractor. The term “50-percent completion” means as defined in the contract, or, if not defined in the contract, the point at which the public entity has expended 50 percent of the total construction services costs identified in the contract, plus all change orders and other additions or modifications as provided in the contract.

After reaching 50-percent completion, the contractor may submit a payment request for up to one-half of the retainage amount held by the public entity. The public entity must promptly pay the contractor, unless there is a “good-faith” dispute between the contractor and the public entity. If the public entity government pays retainage to the contractor, the contractor must timely remit payment of such retainage to the appropriate subcontractors and suppliers. However, under specified conditions and with proper notice, the contractor may withhold more than 5 percent retainage from payments to its subcontractors.

Subsection (5) clarifies that the local government may withhold retainage at a rate lower than 10 percent and release the retainage to the contractor; the contractor is subsequently responsible for remitting such retainage to the subcontractors and suppliers.

Subsections (6) and (7) specify that this section does not require the payment or release of amounts that are the subject of a good-faith dispute, of an action brought pursuant to

s. 255.05, F.S.,⁸ or otherwise the subject of another claim or demand, and reiterates that the time limitations set forth in this section apply to any payment request for retainage.

Subsection (8) provides that subsections (1) through (4) do not apply to construction services purchased by a public entity, which are paid for, in whole or in part, with federal moneys and are subject to federal grantor laws and regulations or requirements that are contrary to any provision of the Florida Prompt Payment Act.

Finally, subsection (9) provides that the section does not apply to any construction services costing less than \$200,000.

Section 13 amends s. 255.05, F.S., to provide additional guidelines or restrictions for a subcontractor or supplier when making claims against a payment bond. Subparagraph (2)(a)2. is amended to require that any notice of nonpayment served by a claimant who is not in privity with the contractor (not in contract, typically a subcontractor or supplier under contract with an entity under contract with the prime contractor) which includes sums for retainage must specify the portion of the amount claimed for retainage. In addition, other provisions in this subparagraph are deleted and transferred to proposed subsection (10).

Subsection (10) is created to prohibit a claimant (a subcontractor or supplier) from initiating an action for the sole purpose of recovery of retainage against the contractor or against the surety providing a payment or performance bond until:

- The public entity has paid out that retainage to the contractor, and the time provided in s. 255.073(3), F.S., or s. 218.735(6), F.S., for payment of that retainage has expired;⁹
- The claimant has completed all contracted work and 70 days have passed since the public entity received the contractor's final payment request;
- 160 days have passed since reaching substantial completion of the construction services purchased, or since reaching beneficial occupancy or use of the project; or
- The claimant has made a written request to the contractor for any of the following information and the contractor has failed to respond within 10 days of receipt:
 - whether the project has reached substantial completion or if beneficial occupancy or use of the project has occurred;
 - whether the contractor has received payment of the claimant's retainage; or
 - whether the contractor has sent its final payment request to the public entity.

If none of these conditions can be satisfied and, consequently, and an action for recovery of retainage cannot be instituted within the 1-year limitation period, the limitation period is extended until 120 days after one of the conditions is satisfied.

⁸ See section 13 of this bill.

⁹ See section 7 of this CS. Proposed s. 255.073(3), F.S., requires that when a contractor receives payment from a public entity for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the contractor, the contractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 10 days after the contractor's receipt of payment. Similarly, when a subcontractor receives payment from a contractor for labor, services, or materials furnished by subcontractors and suppliers hired by the subcontractor, the subcontractor must remit payment due to those subcontractors and suppliers within 7 days after the subcontractor's receipt of payment.

Section 14 amends s. 287.0585, F.S., (which governs late payments by contractors to subcontractors and penalties in contracts between a contractor and a state agency), to provide that the section is not applicable when payments under a contract are governed by the newly created “Florida Prompt Payment Act” in ss. 255.0705-255.078, F.S.

Section 15 amends s. 95.11(2)(b), F.S., to correct a reference, resulting from changes proposed in section 13 of the bill.

Section 16 provides that neither the amendments to ss. 95.11, 218.70, 218.72, 218.735, 255.05, and 255.071, F.S., by the CS for CS, nor s. 255.078, F.S., as created by the bill, applies to any existing construction contract pending approval, or to any project advertised for bid on or before the effective date of the act.

Section 17 provides that this act will take effect October 1, 2005.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. Other Constitutional Issues:

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

This CS for CS may result in more timely payments to contractors and subcontractors who provide services or supplies in the construction of public projects.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This CS for CS may require state and local governments to provide more timely payments to contractors and subcontractors who provide services or supplies in the construction of public projects.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
