

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: Community Affairs Committee

BILL: SB 966

SPONSOR: Senator Smith

SUBJECT: Public Libraries; Construction Grants

DATE: March 11, 2005

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Rhea	Wilson	GO	Favorable
2.	Vickers	Yeatman	CA	Favorable
3.			TA	
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

The bill authorizes the Division of Library and Information Services of the Department of State, to accept and administer moneys appropriated to it for small county public library grants. The purpose is to assist counties and municipalities that have been designated rural communities in accordance with statute to construct, expand or renovate public library facilities to meet the federal requirement of 0.6 square feet per capita of total library floor space. The bill specifies eligibility criteria for competitive grant funding for the public library construction grants. The bill prohibits a library from receiving funds from both public library construction grant programs under s. 257.191, F.S., in the same fiscal year. Rules for the administration of the small county public library grant program are to be developed by the division.

The bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

This bill amends section 257.191 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The Division of Library and Information Services (division) is a division of the Department of State (department).¹ Section 257.191, F.S., authorizes the division to administer library construction grant money that is appropriated to it and to allocate the appropriation to municipal, county, and regional libraries. Under the library construction grant program, assistance is provided for the construction of new buildings, site acquisition, and the acquisition, expansion, or remodeling of existing buildings that are used as municipal, county, and regional public

¹ The department is created in s. 20.10, F.S. There are six divisions in the department: Elections, Historical Resources, Corporations, Library and Information Services, Cultural Affairs, and Administration.

libraries. Any of the 67 county general governments, incorporated municipalities, special districts, and special tax districts that establish or maintain a public library and provide free public library service can apply for a grant. The grants are required by law to have a local match of no less than the grant amount, on a dollar for dollar basis, up to the maximum grant amount of \$500,000, unless waived pursuant to the procedures contained in s. 288.06561, F.S. The maximum state grant is set by rule at \$500,000 in non-recurring funds and the minimum is set at \$10,000.² The minimum project size is 3,000 square feet.

Section 288.06561, F.S., provides for a reduction or waiver of financial match requirements for rural areas meeting the requirements under the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) in s. 288.0656, F.S. Each agency and organization is required to develop a proposal to waive or reduce the match requirement for rural areas. These proposals are delivered to the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development for distribution to REDI agencies and organizations. Waivers and reductions must be requested by the county or community. The county or community also must have three or more of the factors identified in s. 288.0656(2)(a), F.S., which defines the term “economic distress.” “Economic distress” means

... conditions affecting the fiscal and economic viability of a rural community, including such factors as low per capita income, low per capita taxable values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly earned wages compared to the state average, low housing values compared to the state average, high percentages of the population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment opportunities.

Based upon the REDI county library facility needs chart, many counties have insufficient revenue capacity at the local level to generate the money to construct or expand library facilities to meet federal square footage per capita standards. These counties are in need of more than the \$500,000 cap to begin to meet construction needs.

According to the Department of State, in FY 2003-04, seven grants were awarded from the Public Library Construction Grant program, totaling \$3,120,000. Seven counties benefited from the grants, but two of the seven grants were awarded to municipalities: Duval, Gadsden, Hillsborough, Palm Beach (City of Boca Raton), Pinellas (City of Largo), Sarasota, and Wakulla counties. The department also reports that for FY 2004-05, 26 grants were awarded from the Public Library Construction Grant program, totaling \$11,872,575.

FY 2004-05 Public Library Construction Grants	
County	Amount
Bay	\$500,000
Broward (South Regional project)	\$500,000
Broward (West Regional project)	\$500,000
Broward (City of Lighthouse Point)	\$285,000
Broward (City of Plantation)	\$225,000
Charlotte	\$500,000

² Rule 1B2-2.011(2)(b), F.A.C.

Citrus	\$500,000
Escambia	\$500,000
Gadsden	\$500,000
Highlands	\$362,575
Hillsborough (South County Regional)	\$500,000
Hillsborough (Upper Tampa Bay)	\$500,000
Duval (Argyle Branch)	\$500,000
Duval (West Regional)	\$500,000
Lee	\$500,000
Manatee (Central Library)	\$500,000
Manatee (Palmetto Branch)	\$500,000
Miami-Dade (City of Hialeah)	\$500,000
Miami-Dade	\$500,000
Miami-Dade (City of North Miami)	\$500,000
Miami-Dade (Town of Surfside)	\$500,000
Okaloosa (City of Mary Esther)	\$350,000
Okaloosa (City of Niceville)	\$400,000
Polk (City of Lakeland)	\$470,000
Saint Lucie	\$500,000
Santa Rosa	\$500,000

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill authorizes the Division of Library and Information Services of the Department of State to accept and administer moneys appropriated to it for small county public library grants. The purpose is to assist counties and municipalities that are designated rural communities in accordance with ss. 288.0656(2)(b) and 288.06561, F.S., to construct, expand or renovate public library facilities to meet the federal requirement of 0.6 square feet per capita of total library floor space. To be eligible for funds, a county or municipality:

- Must meet the definition of rural community provided in s. 288.0656(2)(b), F.S.³
- Must have less than 0.6 square feet per capita of total library floor space.
- Must certify that the county or municipality will appropriate and expend sufficient funds to operate the completed library facility.
- May not have been awarded a grant under the public library construction grant program provided under subsection (1) for the same fiscal year.

The bill prohibits a library from receiving funds from both public library construction grant programs under s. 257.191, F.S., in the same fiscal year.

³ “Rural community” as defined by s. 288.0656(2)(b), F.S., means (a) a county with a population of 75,000 or less; (b) a county with a population of 100,000 or less that is contiguous to a county with a population of 100,000 or less that is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less; (c) a municipality within a county described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.; (d) An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress factors identified in paragraph (a) and verified by the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development.

Rules for the administration of the small county public library grant program are to be developed by the Division of Library and Information Services of the Department of State.

The grant program does not take effect until a specific appropriation is made to the department for the funding of these grants.

The bill is effective upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

The bill does not require expenditure of funds by local governments, does not reduce authority to raise revenue, or reduce the percentage of state tax shared with local governments.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Implementation of the bill specifically is made dependent upon legislative appropriation for the grant.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

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.
