

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: Environmental Preservation Committee

BILL: CS/SB 1892

INTRODUCER: Environmental Preservation Committee and Senator Margolis

SUBJECT: Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program

DATE: April 19, 2006

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Herrin	Yeatman	CA	Fav/1 amendment
2.	Branning	Kiger	EP	Fav/CS
3.			GA	
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

This committee substitute allows a local government to submit three Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program grant applications during the grant application period instead of two. The maximum project grant amount is increased from \$200,000 to \$500,000. The Department of Environmental Protection must adopt, by rule, a determination of the appropriate incentive for encouraging the construction of inclusive playgrounds. Defines “inclusive playgrounds.”

This committee substitute amends section 375.075 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP or department) is authorized under s. 375.075, F.S., to establish the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) for the purpose of providing grants to qualified local governmental entities for the acquisition and development of land for public outdoor recreation. The program is funded through the Land Acquisition Trust Fund¹ and the Florida Forever Trust Fund.² Under FRDAP, grants are awarded only to those projects with the sole purpose of providing outdoor recreational opportunities to the public. An applicant must either own the project site or lease the site for a sufficient period of time to satisfy the required dedication period.

The department administers the program which includes a competitive project selection process designed to maximize the outdoor recreation benefit to the public. The selection criteria shall, at a minimum, rank:

¹ Section 201.15(2) and (3), F.S.

² Section 259.105(3)(c), F.S.

- The extent to which the project would implement the outdoor recreation goals, objectives, and priorities specified in the state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan; and
- The extent to which the project would provide for priority resource or facility needs in the region as specified in the state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.

A local government may submit up to two grant applications during each application period with the maximum grant for each project application not to exceed \$200,000. However, a local government may not have more than three active projects expending grant funds during any state fiscal year. In three of the last five years (excluding 2006), all projects on the priority list were funded.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 375.075, F.S., to allow a local government to submit up to three FRDAP grant applications during each application period instead of two. However, the local government may still only have three active projects using grant funds during any fiscal year. The committee substitute also increases the maximum project grant for each project application from \$200,000 to \$500,000. The DEP shall adopt, by rule, a determination of the appropriate incentive for encouraging the construction of inclusive playgrounds. The term “inclusive playground” means a playground that is a barrier-free environment designed for children of all abilities, including those with physical, developmental, cognitive, and sensory disabilities, to experience independent, self-directed play, each at his or her own highest level of ability, and includes play components and equipment that are accessible and engage children who have various motor impairments.

Section 2 provides the act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

This committee substitute does not require cities and counties to expend funds or limit their authority to raise revenue or receive state-shared revenues as specified by s. 18, Art. VII, State Constitution.

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:

This committee substitute would increase the maximum amount available for a project grant under FRDAP from \$200,000 to \$500,000. Over the past few years, construction costs have increased for projects using FRDAP grants. For inclusive playgrounds, the equipment is relatively expensive compared to the equipment used in a regular playground. This committee substitute does not increase the overall funding for the FRDAP grants. A local government would be able to submit up to three grant applications during the application period instead of two; however, a local government may still only have three active projects using grants funds in any fiscal year. The department estimates that the cost for an inclusive playground is \$300,000.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

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

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

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