

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 835 Affordable Housing
SPONSOR(S): Attkisson
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** CS/SB 934

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) Business Regulation Committee	_____	Livingston	Liepshutz
2) Growth Management Committee	_____	_____	_____
3) Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations Committee	_____	_____	_____
4) Commerce Council	_____	_____	_____
5) _____	_____	_____	_____

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Chapter 420, F.S., is cited as the "State Housing Strategy Act." The "Florida Homeownership Assistance Program" is designed to provide financial assistance to home buyers who meet the qualification criteria under the program. The State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program is available to provide funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing. Chapter 723, F.S., addresses various aspects of the relationship between a mobile home owner and a mobile home park owner, including financial assistance to home owners who are displaced when the property, under certain circumstances, is no longer used as a mobile home park.

The bill amends the statutory guidelines of the Homeownership Assistance Program to provide a funding mechanism for certain classroom teachers to help offset any down payment required to purchase a home. To qualify for financial assistance the individual must be employed as a K-12 classroom teacher and be certified in a critical need area of exceptional student education, mathematics, science, or reading in the state.

The bill requires a local government or community redevelopment agency (CRA) with a mobile home park within its jurisdiction which is closing due to a change in land use to use available funding sources to provide financial assistance to help offset the costs to relocate those home owners displaced by the change in use of the property. It requires local governments to approve "new" mobile home parks to accommodate displaced residents and provide other affordable housing options. The bill encourages local governments to use regulatory and financial incentives for the continued operation of mobile home parks rather than change the use of the property.

The bill imposes a late fee on mobile home park owners who change the use of land for a mobile home park, but fail to make the required payment to the Florida Mobile Home Relocation Corporation. It limits the period for filing an application to help fund moving expenses of the home owner to 1 year after the expiration of the eviction period as established in the notice of the change of land use. The bill also encourages mobile home park owners to organize as a homeowners' association for the purpose of negotiating with the park owner a right of first refusal to purchase the park.

The bill requires local governments to provide a written document to substantiate its determination that adequate mobile home parks or other suitable facilities exist for the relocation of the home owners before approving a rezoning application for a mobile home park. It also requires the governmental entity considering the rezoning application to prepare a good-faith estimate of the fiscal benefits of such a change in land use.

The bill is not anticipated to have a significant fiscal impact on state or local government. Funding for the provision of services should reflect a shift of appropriations among programs under the State Housing Trust Fund and Mobile Home Relocation Trust Fund.

This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives.

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FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

“Provide limited government” - the bill provides benefits for potential homeownership within the current framework that is designed to support affordable housing goals. In so doing the bill states that “local governments and redevelopment agencies assist in the relocation of and the provision of assistance to mobile home owners and are authorized to use all available funding sources so that the state's most needy residents are protected.”

“Ensure lower taxes” - the bill imposes late fees for failure to make timely payments to the Florida Mobile Home Relocation Corporation.

“Safeguard individual liberty” - the bill states, in part, “the Legislature finds that a right of first refusal to purchase a mobile home park is a property right that should be negotiated between two parties at arm's length and for due consideration.”

“Empower families” - The bill is titled “an act relating to affordable housing.”

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present situation – Affordable housing

Chapter 420, F.S., is cited as the “State Housing Strategy Act.” Section 420.5088, F.S., establishes the “Florida Homeownership Assistance Program” (HAP) to provide financial assistance to home buyers who meet the qualification criteria under the program. The State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP) is available to provide funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing.

Chapter 723, F.S., addresses various aspects of the relationship between a mobile home owner and a mobile home park owner, including financial assistance to home owners who are displaced when the property, under certain circumstances, is no longer used as a mobile home park.

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) was created by the Legislature as an entrepreneurial public corporation organized to provide and promote the public welfare by administering the governmental function of financing or refinancing housing and related facilities in Florida. The FHFC administers various programs which facilitate the development and purchase of affordable housing for Floridians. These programs are financed through a variety of state, federal and local sources.

Florida Homeownership Assistance Program

The HAP was created by s. 420.5088, F.S., for the purpose of assisting low-income persons in purchasing a home by reducing the cost of the home with below-market construction financing; by reducing the amount of down payment and closing costs paid by the borrower to a maximum of five percent of the purchase price; or by reducing the monthly payment to an affordable amount for the purchaser. Loans are made available at an interest rate not to exceed three percent. The balance of any loan is due at closing if the property is sold or transferred.

State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program

FHFC administers the SHIP, which provides funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing. The

program was designed to serve very low, low and moderate income families. Depending on an individual's income, a person could be eligible for home repair or replacement, down payment assistance, rental housing assistance and other affordable housing assistance.

State's Teacher Shortage

Historically, two trends have determined the need for classroom teachers: teacher turnover and student enrollment. The Florida Department of Education's official teacher recruiting website (<http://www.teachinflorida.com>) currently lists four programs that provide housing assistance to teachers:

1. The TEACHER NEXT DOOR PROGRAM offers HUD-owned, single family homes to public and private school teachers at a 50 percent discount. To be eligible, teachers must be employed full-time and agree to make the home their sole residence for three years following the purchase. In addition, teachers must work in the area in which the home is located.
2. The TEACHER ZERO DOWN PROGRAM, sponsored by Bank of America, helps teachers overcome one of the biggest obstacles to home ownership—the down payment. This program provides zero percent financing with little or no cash at closing.
3. The TEACHER FLEX PROGRAM, a Bank of America program, provides teachers with home loans that do not require a large savings or an extensive credit history. This program requires a three percent down payment with \$500 from personal funds and little cash at closing.
4. The APARTMENT ASSISTANCE/RESIDENTIAL SUBSIDIES PROGRAM, created by Equity Residential Properties Trust, in partnership with the Department of Education, reduces teachers' rent by providing a zero application fee, taking \$300 off move-in fees, and providing \$500 credit towards the purchase of a home.

Teachers also may qualify for various FHFC programs, depending on their income and location.

Effect of proposed changes

The bill amends the statutory guidelines of the HAP to provide a funding mechanism for certain classroom teachers to help offset any down payment required to purchase a home. To qualify for financial assistance the individual must be employed as a K-12 classroom teacher and be certified in a critical need area of exceptional student education, mathematics, science, or reading in the state.

The FHFC is authorized by the bill to establish additional eligibility criteria, including:

- homestead residency, and
- a commitment of no less than five years of full-time, permanent employment as a teacher.

The bill mandates payment from HAP funds in the amount of \$4,000 as down payment financial assistance under two scenarios:

(1) "if all [local government jurisdictions] within which an eligible recipient is employed and resides waives any impact fees that occur incidental to the recipient's home purchase;"

and, in addition to the funds made available in (1) above,

(2) "...the [HAP] program shall provide matching funds up to \$4,000 as down payment assistance if the county within which an eligible recipient is employed provides State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program [SHIP] funds to the eligible recipient..."

The bill includes a “statement of encouragement” directed to each county to develop an annual county housing plan that emphasizes the recruitment and retention of classroom teachers certified in critical need areas.

The bill appropriates the sum of \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2006-2007 from the State Housing Trust Fund to the HAP to provide funding for the K-12 classroom teacher program created in the bill.

Present situation – Mobile home housing

Florida Mobile Home Park Regulation – In General

The landlord-tenant relationship between a mobile home park owner and a mobile home owner in a mobile home park is a unique relationship. Traditional landlord-tenant concepts are thought inapplicable where the land is owned by the park and the homes on the property are owned by the home owner. This relationship is impacted by the high cost of moving a mobile home. Chapter 723, F.S., governs the relationship between mobile home park owners and mobile home owners.

A mobile home park of 9 or fewer lots is not regulated by Chapter 723, F.S. Currently, there are 321,549 mobile home lots and 2,601 mobile home parks filed with the Division of Land Sales, Condominiums, and Mobile Homes.

Present situation – Financial assistance for mobile home relocation expenses

Section 723.0612, F.S., relates to change in use of the land comprising a mobile home park, or a change in the portion upon which the tenant resides. It also addresses relocation expenses and payments by a mobile home park owner. This section provides that, if a mobile home owner is required to move due to a change in use of the mobile home park property, and the mobile home owner meets certain conditions, the mobile home owner is entitled to financial assistance to help offset certain moving expenses.

Relocation trust fund

Section 723.06115, F.S., establishes the Florida Mobile Home Relocation Trust Fund within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The relocation trust fund was created to provide revenues for payments to mobile home owners under the relocation program and for the administrative costs associated with managing the trust fund.

Section 723.007, F.S., imposes an annual assessment of \$4.00 per lot on mobile home lots located within mobile home parks. The fee is collected by the mobile home park owner and is paid to the Division of Land Sales, Condominiums, and Mobile Homes. These revenues are deposited into the Florida Land Sales, Condominiums, and Mobile Homes Trust Fund to partially fund operations of the division. Additionally, this section imposes a one dollar surcharge on the annual assessment for deposit in the relocation trust fund. Section 320.08015, F.S., relating to motor vehicles, imposes an additional one dollar annual license tax on mobile homes for deposit in the relocation trust fund.

Relocation corporation

Section 723.0611, F.S., relates to the Florida Mobile Home Relocation Corporation (corporation). The corporation is administered by a board of directors made up of six members. The corporation is authorized to manage the relocation trust fund.

Currently, as a result of being required to relocate due to a change in the use of the mobile home park, an owner of a mobile home has the option of being reimbursed for moving expenses or under subsection (7) of s. 723.0612, F.S., a mobile home owner may elect to sell the mobile home rather than move it. When the mobile home owner makes application for payment and is approved by the

corporation, the mobile home owner is then authorized to receive compensation from the corporation which is paid out of the relocation trust fund.

The amount of the payment is the actual moving expenses of relocating the mobile home to a new location within a 50-mile radius of the vacated park, or \$3,000 for a single-section mobile home, or \$6,000 for a multi-section mobile home, whichever is less. Moving expenses are defined to include the cost of taking down, moving, and setting up the mobile home in a new location. The mobile home park owner is required to make payment to the corporation in the amount of \$2,750 per single-section mobile home and \$3,750 per multi-section mobile home for each application for moving expenses due to a change in land use. These payments are due within 30 days after receipt of the invoice from the corporation. Payments received by the corporation are deposited in the relocation trust fund.

Sale of a mobile home park

The mobile home owners in a mobile home park have a statutory right of first refusal to purchase the mobile home park under certain circumstances. In a mobile home park where the mobile home owners have created a homeowners' association, if the mobile home park owner "offers [the] mobile home park for sale", the mobile home park owner must notify the homeowners' association of the offer. This requirement applies when the mobile home park is offered for sale by the owner to the general public or another individual. A mobile home park owner who receives an unsolicited offer to purchase the mobile home park is under no duty to offer the homeowners' association the opportunity to purchase the mobile home park.

Local zoning requirements

Section 723.083, F.S., prohibits any local or state government agency from rezoning (or taking "any other official action") which would result in the removal or relocation of mobile home owners residing in mobile home parks, unless the agency first determines that there are adequate mobile home parks or other suitable facilities in existence for relocating the mobile home owners. In an informal opinion issued to Pinellas County, the Attorney General advised that the phrase "adequate mobile home parks or other suitable facilities" means the local government must consider all facilities suitable for the relocation of the mobile home owners, not their mobile homes. See Informal Opinion of Atty.Gen. Jim Smith (January 3, 1986). The opinion includes apartments, trailer parks, and boarding houses as examples of "other suitable facilities" which a government may consider for the relocation of owners.

Effect of proposed changes

Sources of assistance

The bill recognizes the loss of affordable housing which results when the land use for a mobile home park changes and its residents are forced to relocate. The bill requires a local government or CRA with a mobile home park within its jurisdiction which is closing due to a change in the use of land to use available funding sources to help offset the financial impacts. Funds are to be used to assist with the cost of relocating mobile homes, assist with the purchase of a new mobile home if relocation of the existing home is not possible, assist the homeowner in relocating to other types of housing, and relocate the mobile home within the same neighborhood or community.

The bill requires a local government or CRA to use tax increment financing, urban infill and redevelopment funds, general revenue, housing loan assistance program funds, documentary stamp tax revenues from the redevelopment of the mobile home park property which is available to the local government, and impact and permit fees derived from the redevelopment of the park property. The local government or CRA may also use other available sources.

The bill requires local governments to approve the rezoning of property for the development of mobile home parks to provide new homes, affordable housing, or to accommodate the relocation of mobile home owners from a park that is closing due to a change in land use. A local government or CRA is

authorized to enter into a development agreement that has a term of 10 years or less with the owner of a mobile home park to encourage the continued use of the mobile home park for affordable housing and may contain incentives, such as, transferable development credits to the community, tax incentives, or housing assistance to the mobile home park owner.

The Department of Community Affairs is required to provide technical assistance to local governments that wish to promote housing assistance for mobile home park owners who provide affordable housing to park residents.

Relocation payments

The bill imposes a late fee if a mobile home park owner who is changing the land use for a mobile home park fails to make the required payment to the relocation trust fund for each single-section and multi-section mobile home for which the home owner has made application for moving expenses. The late fee ranges from 10 percent to 25 percent depending on when the payment is made and the fee is imposed beginning 30 days after receipt of the invoice for payment.

The bill prohibits a mobile home owner from making an application for funding if the applicant has settled a claim or cause of action against the corporation, park owner, or the park owner's successors in interest directly related to the change in the use of the land for the mobile home park. The bill limits the period for filing an application for moving expenses to 1 year after the expiration of the eviction period as established in the notice of the change of land use.

Documentation

The bill requires a governmental entity to prepare a written document substantiating that adequate mobile home parks or other suitable facilities exist for the relocation of the home owners before the governmental entity may approve an application for rezoning or take any other official action that would result in the removal or relocation of home owners living in a mobile home park. It also requires the governmental entity considering the rezoning or official action to prepare a good-faith estimate of the fiscal benefits of the proposed change in land use. The written document substantiating the existence of adequate mobile home parks or facilities for relocation and the good-faith estimate must be available for public inspection and copying at least 10 days prior to the meeting during which the rezoning or other official act is scheduled to be considered.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 163.31772 F.S., to cite legislative findings and intent relating to changes in land use affecting mobile home parks; to specify requirements regarding funding sources, rezoning, development agreements, and housing assistance.

Section 2. Amends s. 420.5088, F.S., to provide down payment assistance under HAP funding to certain K-12 classroom teachers; requiring the FHFC to develop eligibility criteria; and encouraging counties to develop annual county housing plans that emphasize the recruitment and retention of classroom teachers.

Section 3. Amends s. 723.06116, F.S., to authorize late fees to be imposed if a mobile home park owner does not make timely payments to the FMHRC.

Section 4. Amends s. 723.0612, F.S., to create time frames for submitting and processing applications for funding for relocation expenses by the relocation corporation.

Section 5. Amends s. 723.071, F.S., to specify legislative findings relating to the sale of mobile home parks and encourages owners to organize as homeowners' associations to negotiate with a park owner.

Section 6. Amends s. 723.072, F.S., to correct cross-references.

Section 7. Amends s. 723.083, F.S., to require local governments to document in writing the existence of facilities available for relocation of residents of a mobile home park and a written estimate of fiscal benefits.

Section 8. Provides an appropriation of \$50,000,000 from the State Housing Trust Fund.

Section 9. Effective date - Section 8 of the bill takes effect July 1, 2006. The remainder of the bill takes effect upon becoming a law.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

Not anticipated to be significant.

2. Expenditures:

Not anticipated to be significant.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

The Florida Mobile Home Relocation Corporation estimates that the imposition of the graduated late fee will reduce the percentage of late payments to 12 percent, as compared to the 25 percent for fiscal year 2004-2005, and the total late fees collected would be \$7,560 per year.

2. Expenditures:

Current law requires a local government to determine that adequate mobile home parks or other suitable facilities exist for the relocation of the home owners before approving a rezoning application for a mobile home park. The bill requires the determination to be in the form of a written document. The bill also requires the governmental entity considering the rezoning or official action to prepare a good-faith estimate of the fiscal benefits of such a change in land use.

The DCA is required to provide technical assistance to a local government or CRA that wishes to offer a transfer of development rights program or financial assistance as incentives for mobile home park owners to continue to provide affordable housing. There are costs associated with the research and development of these technical assistance programs, implementation, and outreach. The DCA is in the process of estimating these costs.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Mobile home owners would benefit if local governments provide funding for relocation expenses when the owners are evicted from a park that is undergoing a change in land use. The mobile home park owners would benefit from any financial assistance provided by the local government.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

This bill requires a local government or CRA, having a mobile home park within its jurisdiction which is closing due to a change in the use of land, to use available funding sources to provide relocation assistance to the mobile home owners displaced by the change. The bill does not specify the amount of assistance that must be provided to the mobile home owners.

The bill appears to shift funding not create new revenues. The bill specifies in part “notwithstanding any other provision of law, a local government or community redevelopment agency is authorized to and shall....use revenues derived from sources that include....”

The bill is not anticipated to have a significant fiscal impact on state or local government. Funding for the operations of services should reflect a shift of appropriations from program to program.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

No county or municipality shall be bound by any general law requiring such county or municipality to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds unless the Legislature has determined that such law fulfills important state interest and unless; funds have been appropriated that have been estimated at the time of enactment to be sufficient to fund such expenditure; the Legislature authorizes or has authorized a county or municipality to enact a funding source not available for such county or municipality on February 1, 1989 ...the law requiring such expenditure is approved by two-thirds of the membership of each house of the Legislature...

Article VII, Section 18(d) of the Florida Constitution, exempts laws having insignificant fiscal impacts from the requirements of the section. For purposes of legislative application of Article VII, Section 18 of the Florida Constitution, the term “insignificant” has been defined as a matter of legislative policy as an amount not greater than the average statewide population for the applicable fiscal year times ten cents.

The bill does not provide an additional revenue source or an appropriation to fund compliance with its terms. However, under the bill’s provisions the overall fiscal impact on counties and municipalities should be insignificant. As a result, the bill would appear to be exempt from the provisions of Article VII, Section 18 of the Florida Constitution.

2. Other:

None noted.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill specifically authorizes the Department of Community Affairs to adopt rules to promote the transfer of development rights for mobile home park owners who provide affordable housing.

The bill also specifically authorizes the Department of Community Affairs to adopt rules to promote housing assistance to mobile home park owners who provide affordable housing in urban areas.

The bill, on line 158, specifies that

“the corporation [Florida Housing Finance Corporation] shall develop criteria to determine which persons are eligible to receive down payment assistance...”

The authority of the corporation may be clearer if the bill specifies that the criteria requirements be adopted by rule.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

NA.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE & COMBINED BILL CHANGES