

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to children's zones; creating s. 409.147,  
3 F.S.; providing legislative findings and intent; providing  
4 policy and purpose; providing definitions; providing a  
5 process for nominating and selecting a children's zone;  
6 providing for the governing body of a county or  
7 municipality to adopt a resolution designating a  
8 children's zone; specifying contents of the resolution;  
9 requiring the governing body to establish a children's  
10 zone planning team; providing powers and responsibilities  
11 of the planning team; requiring the planning team to  
12 designate working groups; specifying focus areas for the  
13 working groups; providing for the development of a  
14 strategic community plan; providing objectives for each  
15 focus area; requiring the governing body to create a  
16 corporation not for profit for specified purposes;  
17 establishing the Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., pilot  
18 project; providing for management by an entity organized  
19 as a corporation not for profit; providing geographic  
20 boundaries for the zone; providing for designation and  
21 appointment of a board of directors; providing for  
22 meetings and duties of the board of directors; providing  
23 per diem and travel expenses; requiring the board to enter  
24 into a contract to develop a business plan; providing for  
25 reports to the Legislature; providing appropriations;  
26 providing an effective date.

27  
28 WHEREAS, the State of Florida is often referred to as the

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29 Sunshine State, a term that suggests warm weather, a carefree  
30 lifestyle, and unlimited potential for nurturing hope and  
31 realizing dreams for a fulfilling and productive life, and

32 WHEREAS, communities within the state suffering from  
33 fragile infrastructures and multiple social ills are home to  
34 families for whom those obstacles limit, or completely preclude,  
35 their ability to create a good quality of life for themselves  
36 and for their children, and

37 WHEREAS, a proposed community initiative known as a  
38 children's zone, which is modeled after the long-established and  
39 successful Harlem Children's Zone, seeks to change that  
40 experience, and

41 WHEREAS, the initiative will be based on the belief that in  
42 order to help children from troubled communities become healthy  
43 adults and responsible, fulfilled members of their communities,  
44 two things must happen: first, they must be surrounded by a  
45 critical mass of adults who are effective parents engaged in  
46 activities with their children; and second, early in their  
47 lives, they must be exposed to sound health care, intellectual  
48 and social stimulation, and consistent guidance from loving,  
49 attentive adults, and

50 WHEREAS, the initiative seeks to establish a comprehensive,  
51 community-based, coordinated, and targeted system of strategies  
52 and services to revitalize communities with an increased sense  
53 of culture, pride, and togetherness; to support parents; and to  
54 provide comprehensive care for all children within the zone,

55 NOW, THEREFORE,  
56

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

58  
59 Section 1. Section 409.147, Florida Statutes, is created  
60 to read:

61 409.147 Children's zones.--

62 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

63 (a) The Legislature finds that:

64 1. There are neighborhoods in the state where the  
65 infrastructure and opportunities that middle-class communities  
66 take for granted are nonexistent or so marginal that they are  
67 ineffective.

68 2. Children in these neighborhoods are read to by an adult  
69 on a regular basis and attend a prekindergarten education  
70 program at a much lower rate than children in other communities.  
71 The children experience below-average performance on  
72 standardized tests and graduate from high school in fewer  
73 numbers. Most children are eligible for the free or reduced-  
74 price school lunch program.

75 3. Children in these neighborhoods often suffer from high  
76 rates of asthma, a higher risk of lead poisoning, and inadequate  
77 health care, and they are routinely exposed to violence and  
78 crime.

79 4. In spite of these obstacles, these neighborhoods are  
80 many times home to strong individuals and institutions that are  
81 committed to making a difference in the lives of children and  
82 their families.

83 (b) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
84 assist disadvantaged areas within the state in creating a

85 community-based service network that develops, coordinates, and  
86 provides quality education, accessible health care, youth  
87 development programs, opportunities for employment, and safe and  
88 affordable housing for children and families living within its  
89 boundaries.

90 (2) POLICY AND PURPOSE.--It is the policy of this state to  
91 provide the necessary means to assist local communities, the  
92 children and families who live in those communities, and the  
93 private sector in creating a sound educational, social, and  
94 economic environment. To achieve this objective, the state  
95 intends to provide investments sufficient to encourage community  
96 partners to commit financial and other resources to severely  
97 disadvantaged areas. The purpose of this section is to establish  
98 a process that clearly identifies the severely disadvantaged  
99 areas and provides guidance for developing a new social service  
100 paradigm that systematically coordinates programs that address  
101 the critical needs of children and their families and for  
102 directing efforts to rebuild the basic infrastructure of the  
103 community. The Legislature, therefore, declares the creation of  
104 children's zones, through the collaborative efforts of  
105 government and the private sector, to be a public purpose.

106 (3) DEFINITIONS.--As used in this section, the term:

107 (a) "Governing body" means the commission or other  
108 legislative body charged with governing a county or  
109 municipality.

110 (b) "Ounce" means the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida,  
111 Inc.

112 (c) "Planning team" means a children's zone planning team

113 established under this section.

114 (d) "Resident" means a person who lives or operates a  
 115 small community-based business or organization within the  
 116 boundaries of the children's zone.

117 (4) CHILDREN'S ZONE NOMINATING PROCESS.--A county or  
 118 municipality, or a county and one or more municipalities  
 119 together, may apply to Ounce to designate an area as a  
 120 children's zone after the governing body:

121 (a) Adopts a resolution that:

122 1. Finds that an area exists in such county or  
 123 municipality, or in the county and one or more municipalities,  
 124 which chronically exhibits extreme and unacceptable levels of  
 125 poverty, unemployment, physical deterioration, as well as  
 126 limited access to quality educational, health care, and social  
 127 services.

128 2. Determines that the rehabilitation, conservation, or  
 129 redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of the area is  
 130 necessary in the interest of improving the health, wellness,  
 131 education, living conditions, and livelihoods of the children  
 132 and families who live in the county or municipality.

133 3. Determines that the revitalization of the area can  
 134 occur only if the state and the private sector invest resources  
 135 to improve infrastructure and the provision of services.

136 (b) Establishes a children's zone planning team as  
 137 provided in subsection (5).

138 (c) Develops and adopts a strategic community plan as  
 139 provided in subsection (6).

140 (d) Creates a corporation not for profit as provided in

141 subsection (7).

142 (5) CHILDREN'S ZONE PLANNING TEAM.--

143 (a) After the governing body adopts the resolution  
144 described in subsection (4), the county or municipality shall  
145 establish a children's zone planning team.

146 (b) The planning team shall include residents and  
147 representatives from community-based organizations and other  
148 community institutions. At least half of the members of the  
149 planning team shall be residents.

150 (c) The planning team shall:

151 1. Develop a planning process that sets the direction for,  
152 builds a commitment to, and develops the capacity to realize the  
153 children's zone concept.

154 2. Develop a vision of what the children's zone will look  
155 like when the challenges, problems, and opportunities in the  
156 children's zone are successfully addressed.

157 3. Identify important opportunities, strengths,  
158 challenges, and problems in the children's zone.

159 4. Develop a strategic community plan consisting of goals,  
160 objectives, tasks, the designation of responsible parties, the  
161 identification of resources needed, timelines for implementation  
162 of the plan, and procedures for monitoring outcomes.

163 (d) The planning team shall designate working groups to  
164 specifically address each of the following focus areas:

165 1. Early development and care of children.

166 2. Education of children and youth.

167 3. Health and wellness.

168 4. Youth support.

- 169        5. Parent and guardian support.
- 170        6. Adult education, training, and jobs.
- 171        7. Community safety.
- 172        8. Housing and community development.
- 173        (6) CHILDREN'S ZONE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN.--After the
- 174 governing body adopts the resolution described in subsection
- 175 (4), the working groups shall develop objectives and identify
- 176 strategies for each focus area. The objectives, specified by
- 177 focus area, for a working group may include, but not be limited
- 178 to:
- 179        (a) Early development and care of children.
- 180            1. Providing resources to enable every child to be
- 181 adequately nurtured in the first 3 years of life.
- 182            2. Ensuring that all schools are ready for children and
- 183 all children are ready for school.
- 184            3. Facilitating enrollment in half-day or full-day
- 185 prekindergarten for all 3-year old and 4-year old children.
- 186            4. Strengthening parent and guardian relationships with
- 187 care providers.
- 188            5. Providing support and education for families and child
- 189 care providers.
- 190        (b) Education of children and youth.
- 191            1. Increasing the level and degree of accountability of
- 192 persons who are responsible for the development and well-being
- 193 of all children in the children's zone.
- 194            2. Changing the structure and function of schools to
- 195 increase the quality of and the amount of time spent on
- 196 instruction and increase programmatic options and offerings.

197           3. Creating a safe and respectful environment for student  
 198 learning.

199           4. Identifying and supporting points of alignment between  
 200 the children's zone community plan and the school district's  
 201 strategic plan.

202           (c) Health and wellness.

203           1. Facilitating enrollment of all eligible children in the  
 204 Florida Kidcare program and providing full access to high-  
 205 quality drug and alcohol treatment services.

206           2. Eliminating health disparities between racial and  
 207 cultural groups, including improving outcomes and increasing  
 208 interventions.

209           3. Providing fresh, good quality, affordable, and  
 210 nutritious food within the children's zone.

211           4. Providing all children in the children's zone with  
 212 access to safe, structured, and unstructured recreation.

213           (d) Youth support.

214           1. Increasing the high school graduation rate.

215           2. Increasing leadership development and employment  
 216 opportunities for youth.

217           (e) Parent and guardian support.

218           1. Increasing parent and adult literacy.

219           2. Expanding access for parents to critical resources,  
 220 such as jobs, transportation, day care, and after-school care.

221           3. Improving the effectiveness of the ways in which  
 222 systems communicate and collaborate with parents and the ways in  
 223 which parents communicate and collaborate with systems.

224           4. Making the services of the Healthy Families Florida



225 program available to provide multiyear support to expectant  
 226 parents and persons caring for infants and toddlers.

227 (f) Adult education, training, and jobs.

228 1. Creating job opportunities for adults which lead to  
 229 career development.

230 2. Establishing a career and technical school or a  
 231 satellite of such a school in the children's zone which includes  
 232 a one-stop career center.

233 (g) Community safety.

234 1. Providing a safe environment for all children at home,  
 235 in school, and in the community.

236 2. Eliminating the economic, political, and social forces  
 237 that lead to a lack of safety within the family, the community,  
 238 schools, and institutional structures.

239 3. Assessing policies and practices, including sentencing,  
 240 incarceration, detention, and data reporting, in order to reduce  
 241 youth violence, crime, and recidivism.

242 (h) Housing and community development.

243 1. Strengthening the residential real estate market.

244 2. Building on existing efforts to promote socioeconomic  
 245 diversity when developing a comprehensive land use strategic  
 246 plan.

247 3. Promoting neighborhood beautification strategies.

248 (7) CHILDREN'S ZONE CORPORATION.--After the governing body  
 249 adopts the resolution described in subsection (4), the county or  
 250 municipality shall create a corporation not for profit which  
 251 shall be registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in  
 252 compliance with chapter 617. The purpose of the corporation is

253 to facilitate fundraising, to secure broad community ownership  
 254 of the children's zone, and, if the area selected by the  
 255 governing body is designated as a children's zone, to:

256 (a) Begin to transfer responsibility for planning from the  
 257 children's zone planning team to the corporation.

258 (b) Begin the implementation and governance of the  
 259 children's zone community plan.

260 (8) CREATION OF MAGIC CITY CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC., PILOT  
 261 PROJECT.--

262 (a) There is created within the Liberty City neighborhood  
 263 in Miami-Dade County a 10-year pilot project zone that, by  
 264 November 1, 2007, shall be managed by an entity organized as a  
 265 corporation not for profit which shall be registered,  
 266 incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance with chapter  
 267 617. The corporation shall be known as the Magic City Children's  
 268 Zone, Inc., and shall be administratively housed within the  
 269 Belafonte Tacolcy Center. However, Magic City Children's Zone,  
 270 Inc., is not subject to control, supervision, or direction by  
 271 the Belafonte Tacolcy Center in any manner.

272 (b) This pilot project zone is designed to apply to an  
 273 area that is large enough to include all of the necessary  
 274 components of community life, including, but not limited to,  
 275 schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial  
 276 areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and  
 277 services to reach every willing member of the neighborhood.  
 278 Therefore, the geographic boundaries of the pilot project zone  
 279 are:

280 1. Northwest 79th Street to the north;

- 281           2. Northwest 36th Street to the south;  
 282           3. North Miami Avenue to the east; and  
 283           4. Northwest 27th Avenue to the west.  
 284           (c)1. The corporation shall be governed by a 15-member  
 285 board of directors. The board of directors shall consist of the  
 286 following members:  
 287           a. The chief executive officer of the Belafonte Tacolcy  
 288 Center.  
 289           b. The executive director of the Carrie P. Meek  
 290 Entrepreneurial Education Center, Miami-Dade College.  
 291           c. The director of the Parks and Recreation Department of  
 292 the City of Miami.  
 293           d. The director of the Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center.  
 294           e. The chief executive officer of the Urban League of  
 295 Greater Miami.  
 296           f. The director of the Liberty City Service Partnership.  
 297           g. The regional superintendent of the Miami-Dade County  
 298 Public Schools.  
 299           h. The president of the Student Government Association of  
 300 Northwestern High School.  
 301           i. The president of the Student Government Association of  
 302 Edison High School.  
 303           j. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association  
 304 of Northwestern High School.  
 305           k. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association  
 306 of Edison High School.  
 307           l. Four members from the local private business sector, to  
 308 be appointed by a majority vote of the members designated in

309 sub-subparagraphs a.-k., all of whom must have significant  
310 experience in one of the focus areas specified in subsection  
311 (6).

312 2. All members of the board of directors shall be  
313 appointed no later than 90 days following the incorporation of  
314 the Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., and:

315 a. Eleven members initially appointed pursuant to this  
316 paragraph shall each serve a 4-year term.

317 b. The remaining initial four appointees shall each serve  
318 a 2-year term.

319 c. Each member appointed thereafter shall serve a 4-year  
320 term.

321 d. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which  
322 the original appointment was made, and a member appointed to  
323 fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of that term.

324 e. A member may not serve more than 8 years in consecutive  
325 terms.

326 3. The board of directors shall annually elect a  
327 chairperson and a vice chairperson from among the board's  
328 members. The members may, by a vote of eight members, remove a  
329 member from the position of chairperson or vice chairperson  
330 before the expiration of his or her term as chairperson or vice  
331 chairperson. His or her successor shall be elected to serve for  
332 the balance of the removed chairperson's or vice chairperson's  
333 term.

334 4. The board of directors shall meet at least four times  
335 each year upon the call of the chairperson, at the request of  
336 the vice chairperson, or at the request of a majority of the

337 membership. A majority of the membership constitutes a quorum.  
338 The board of directors may take official action by a majority  
339 vote of the members present at any meeting at which a quorum is  
340 present. The board may conduct its meetings through  
341 teleconferences or other similar means.

342 5. A member of the board of directors may be removed by a  
343 majority of the membership. Absence from three consecutive  
344 meetings results in automatic removal.

345 6. Each member of the board of directors shall serve  
346 without compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for travel  
347 and per diem expenses as provided in s. 112.061 while in the  
348 performance of his or her duties.

349 7. The corporation shall create a standing advisory board  
350 to assist in any part of its delegated duties. The membership of  
351 the standing advisory board shall reflect the expertise  
352 necessary for the implementation of the children's zone pilot  
353 project.

354 8. The board of directors has the power and duty to:

355 a. Adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws necessary to  
356 govern its activities.

357 b. Begin to transfer responsibility for planning from the  
358 children's zone planning team to the corporation.

359 c. Begin the implementation and governance of the  
360 children's zone community plan.

361 d. Enter into a contract with a management consultant who  
362 has experience working with social service and educational  
363 entities for the purpose of developing a 10-year comprehensive  
364 business plan to carry out the provisions of this section.

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365        (d) Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., shall submit an  
366 annual report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of  
367 the House of Representatives by January 31, 2008, and by January  
368 31 of each year thereafter, which shall include a comprehensive  
369 and detailed report of its operations, activities, and  
370 accomplishments for the prior year as well as its goals for the  
371 current year. The initial report shall also include information  
372 concerning the status of the development of a business plan.

373        Section 2. The sum of \$3.6 million in nonrecurring revenue  
374 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund and the sum of  
375 \$28,362 in nonrecurring revenue is appropriated from the  
376 Department of Children and Family Services Tobacco Settlement  
377 Trust Fund to the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, Inc.,  
378 during the 2007-2008 fiscal year as a grant for a 3-year period  
379 for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this act.

380        Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.