

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS**

**BILL #:** HB 179 Practice of Law  
**SPONSOR(S):** Needelman  
**TIED BILLS:** None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 174

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REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) Committee on Courts		Bond	Bond
2) Safety & Security Council			
3)			
4)			
5)			

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**SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

Current law prohibits the elected sheriff or clerk of the court from practicing law. The same law also prohibits deputy sheriffs and deputy clerks from practicing law.

This bill provides that only full-time deputy sheriffs and full-time deputy clerks are prohibited from practicing law.

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state or local governments.

## FULL ANALYSIS

### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

This bill does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

#### B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Section 454.18, F.S., prohibits the following persons from practicing law:

- Sheriff
- Any deputy sheriff
- Clerk of the Court
- Any Deputy Clerk of the Court.

The law was enacted in 1925. It is unclear why this prohibition was enacted.

The current effect of the bill is felt primarily by reserve contingents of the Sheriff's offices, where practicing attorneys have been prohibited from joining the reserves because of the statute.

This bill amends s. 454.18, F.S., to limit the restriction related to deputy sheriffs and deputy clerks to full-time employees. Thus, this bill has the effect of allowing attorneys to work as part-time deputy sheriffs or part-time deputy clerks.

#### C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1 amends s. 454.18, F.S., regarding the practice of law.

Section 2 provides an effective date of July 1, 2007.

### II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

#### A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

##### 1. Revenues:

None.

##### 2. Expenditures:

None.

#### B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

##### 1. Revenues:

None.

##### 2. Expenditures:

None.

#### C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

**III. COMMENTS**

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds, reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenue in the aggregate, nor reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

This bill does not change the traditional duty that elected sheriffs or elected clerks have to the public. Although allowed by this bill, sheriffs and clerks should not employ a part-time deputy whose duties as a practicing attorney would cause a conflict of interest with the duties to the public as a deputy sheriff or deputy clerk.

D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

No statement submitted.

**IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**

n/a