

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to the Wekiva Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Compliance Grant Program; creating the program in the Department of Health; providing purposes; authorizing certain property owners in certain areas of the Wekiva basin to apply for grants for certain purposes; providing grant limitations; providing for annual adjustments of the amount of the grants; providing for the grant as a rebate of costs incurred; requiring documentation of costs; requiring the Department of Health to adopt rules to administer the grant program; specifying implementation as contingent upon appropriation; requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature relating to reducing nitrogen inputs into the Wekiva River and associated springs; requiring the Department of Health to prepare and submit a report to the Governor and Legislature relating to whether onsite wastewater treatment systems are a significant source of nitrogen to the underlying groundwater relative to other sources; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Wekiva Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Compliance Grant Program.--

(1) The Wekiva Onsite Sewage Treatment and Disposal System Compliance Grant Program is created within the Department of

29 Health, to be administered by the Department of Health. The
30 purpose of the program is to provide grants to low-income
31 property owners in the Wekiva Study Area or the Wekiva River
32 Protection Area using onsite sewage treatment and disposal
33 systems to assist the property owner in complying with rules for
34 onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems developed by the
35 Department of Health, the Department of Environmental
36 Protection, or the St. Johns River Water Management District to
37 enforce compliance with onsite sewage treatment and disposal
38 system standards.

39 (2) Any property owner in the Wekiva Study Area or the
40 Wekiva River Protection Area having an income less than or equal
41 to 200 percent of the federal poverty guideline who is required
42 by rule of the Department of Health, the Department of
43 Environmental Protection, or the St. Johns River Water
44 Management District to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, or
45 modify any new or existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal
46 system on such property may apply to the Department of Health
47 for a grant to assist the owner with the cost of compliance.

48 (3) The amount of the grant is limited to \$10,000 per
49 property and shall be increased each calendar year by the change
50 in the annual average of the "materials and components for
51 construction" series of the producer price index, as calculated
52 and published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau
53 of Statistics, from the previous calendar year.

54 (4) The grant shall be in the form of a rebate to the
55 property owner for costs incurred in complying with requirements
56 for onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems. The property

57 owner shall provide to the Department of Health in the
58 application for a grant documentation of costs incurred in
59 complying with requirements for such systems.

60 (5) The Department of Health shall adopt rules pursuant to
61 ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54, Florida Statutes, providing forms,
62 procedures, and requirements for applying for and disbursing
63 grants under this section and for documenting compliance costs
64 incurred.

65 (6) Implementation of this section is contingent upon an
66 appropriation in the General Appropriations Act.

67 Section 2. (1) Based upon the results of the study funded
68 by the 2006 Regular Session of the Legislature, the Department
69 of Environmental Protection shall prepare a report recommending
70 actions to be taken by the Department of Environmental
71 Protection and the St. Johns Water Management District that will
72 provide the best use of economic resources to reduce nitrogen
73 inputs into the Wekiva River and associated springs. The
74 Department of Environmental Protection shall submit the report
75 to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
76 Representative before the 2008 Regular Session of the
77 Legislature.

78 (2) Based upon the results of the study funded by the 2006
79 Regular Session of the Legislature, the Department of Health
80 shall prepare a report assessing whether onsite wastewater
81 treatment systems are a significant source of nitrogen to the
82 underlying groundwater relative to other sources and shall
83 recommend a range of possible cost-effective onsite wastewater
84 treatment system nitrogen reduction strategies if contributions

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85 are significant. The Department of Health shall submit the
86 report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the
87 Speaker of the House of Representatives no later than February
88 1, 2008.

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