

The Florida Senate
PROFESSIONAL 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: Criminal Justice Committee

BILL: CS/SB 490

INTRODUCER: Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Fasano

SUBJECT: Electric Monitoring/Lost Persons

DATE: April 11, 2007 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Ray	Jameson	CF	Fav/CS
2.	Clodfelter	Cannon	CJ	Favorable
3.			JA	
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

The bill establishes a state grant program to encourage counties to implement county lifesaver programs. The bill describes the components of the program and designates the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to administer the grant program, manage the moneys appropriated to start county programs, and serve as a liaison to county lifesaver programs. The bill also:

- Provides for start up procedures;
- Provides for application for state grant funds;
- Requires local match funds;
- Provides that a county sheriff's office or other lead agency use the grant and match funds to purchase necessary equipment and training to implement a county lifesaver program;
- Provides for an appropriation of \$670,000 to FDLE; and
- Requires that the county lifesaver programs be self-supporting within three years.

The bill would take effect July 1, 2007.

The bill creates an undesignated section of law.

II. Present Situation:

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that gradually destroys a person's memory and ability to learn, reason, make judgments, communicate, and carry out daily activities.

According to the Alzheimer's Association there are more than five million people in the United States living with Alzheimer's disease. This number includes 4.9 million people over the age of 65 and between 200,000 and 500,000 people under the age of 65 with early-onset Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.¹ There are an estimated 465,305 cases of Alzheimer's disease in Florida.

Alzheimer's disease causes millions of Americans to lose their ability to recognize familiar places and faces. Six in ten people with Alzheimer's disease will wander. They may become disoriented and lost, even in their own neighborhood.² Although common, wandering behavior can be dangerous. If not found within 24 hours, half of those who wander risk serious injury or death.³ Persons who have other diseases or disabilities may also wander, e.g. persons who have Autism and Down syndrome.

In 1999, Project Lifesaver International was established as an initiative of the 43rd Search and Rescue Company of the Chesapeake Sheriff's Office in Chesapeake, VA.⁴ Project Lifesaver aides persons suffering from diseases and disabilities by using technology to locate wandering and lost adults and children.⁵ Project Lifesaver is endorsed by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, the International Society of Crime Prevention Practitioners, the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners, the National Sheriff's Association, and the Florida Sheriff's Association.⁶

A person who is enrolled in a lifesaver program designed by Project Lifesaver International wears a personalized wristband that emits a tracking signal on an individually assigned FM radio frequency. When a caregiver notifies a county sheriff's office or other lead agency offering a county lifesaver program that a person is missing, a search and rescue team responds to the area and begins searching with a mobile locator tracking system. Reportedly, search times have been reduced from hours and days to just minutes, and the cost of a typical search has dropped significantly. To date, lifesaver programs designed by Project Lifesaver have resulted in the rescue of 1,470 people who were reported missing and publish a 100 percent success rate.⁷ Currently, 16 Florida Counties have implemented lifesaver programs with the assistance of Project Lifesaver International.⁸

Implementation of a basic lifesaver program through Project Lifesaver International costs \$7,680. This amount includes:⁹

- A two or three day training course to train law enforcement to use electronic tracking equipment in conjunction with an established profile and monitoring program to locate missing persons suffering from dementia, autism, and Down syndrome;

¹ http://www.alz.org/alzheimers_disease_what_is_alzheimers.asp (Last visited, March 29, 2007).

² Alzheimer's Association Safe Return Program Fact Sheet. Alzheimer's Association (2006).

³ Id.

⁴ <http://www.projectlifesaver.org/site/> (Last visited, March 29, 2007).

⁵ Id.

⁶ Id.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id.

⁹ Id.

- Two professional VHF receivers, chargers and AC/DC cords;
- Two directional and two omni-directional antennas and cables;
- Two headsets;
- Two VHF transmitters;
- Two carrying cases; and
- Supporting paperwork, templates, and guides.

The Project Lifesaver International trainer's travel expenses are not covered by this fee. Travel expenses are the responsibility of the county sheriff's office or other lead agency implementing the program, and may consist of any reasonable expense incurred during travel (air fair, meals, hotel, car rental, gas, etc.)

Once a county sheriff's office or other lead agency implements a county lifesaver program through Project Lifesaver International, the county sheriff's office or other lead agency can order transmitters for \$300 per transmitter. This amount includes:¹⁰

- One transmitter;
- One year's supply of transmitter batteries and bands; and
- One transmitter tester (A testing device used by a caregiver to ensure the transmitter is in proper working order).

It is necessary to replace the transmitter battery and elastic band once a month. The current cost is \$8.75 per transmitter. A county sheriff's office or other lead agency implementing a county lifesaver program may provide this service free of charge or they may choose to charge a monthly service fee.¹¹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill establishes a state grant program to encourage each county to implement a county lifesaver program modeled after Project Lifesaver.

The bill provides that the FDLE administer the grant program, manage state moneys appropriated to start county programs, and serve as a liaison to county lifesaver programs.

The bill provides that to apply for state grant moneys to implement a county lifesaver program, a county sheriff's office or other lead agency must submit an application annually by October 1, which includes:

- An estimate of the number of people who might qualify for assistance;
- An estimate of the startup cost;
- A statement of the number of personnel available for tracking lost individuals; and
- The sources and amount of local funds available for matching state grant moneys.

¹⁰ Telephone Conversation with Barry Thacker, Chief of Operations, Project Lifesaver International, in Chesapeake, VA (Mar. 30, 2007).

¹¹ Id.

The bill provides that FDLE prioritize the grant moneys in accordance with:

- A counties' need for tracking services;
- The availability of local sources to provide matching funds; and
- The date the application was received by FDLE.

The bill provides that the maximum amount a county may receive for startup of a county lifesaver program is \$10,000. The grant amount must be matched, dollar-for dollar, by the county. Grants awarded to qualifying counties must be prorated in accordance with the availability of state funds.

The bill provides that a county sheriff's office or other lead agency shall use the grant money and matching funds to purchase the necessary equipment and training needed to implement a county lifesaver program.

The bill provides that a county sheriff's office or other lead agency solicit moneys from private sources to assure that within three years the county lifesaver program is self supporting and no longer requires state funding.

The bill provides for an appropriation of \$670,000 from the General Revenue Fund to FDLE for the purpose of awarding grants to qualifying counties to start county lifesaver programs.

The bill will take effect July 1, 2007.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

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:

This bill would create an annual fiscal impact of no less than \$300 (no monthly service fee) and possibly more (if a county sheriff's office or other lead agency charges a monthly service fee) to each family that enrolls in a county's lifesaver program.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Each county requesting participation in the program is required to match the state grant and make the program self sufficient within three years. This will create a fiscal impact in these counties.

FDLE estimates that the bill will require \$47,682 to administer the state grants as follows:

- Planner IV Salary - \$36,467.
- Expenses - \$9,915.
- Other Capital Outlay - \$1,300.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
