

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; establishing the Jacksonville
26 Children's Zone pilot project; providing for management by
27 an entity organized as a corporation not for profit;
28 providing for a request for proposals process to identify

29 an existing corporation to manage the zone; providing
30 geographic boundaries for the zone; providing for an
31 oversight committee; requiring the corporation to enter
32 into a contract to develop a business plan; providing for
33 reports to the Legislature; requiring the Department of
34 Children and Family Services to contract with certain
35 private not-for-profit corporations for specified
36 purposes; requiring the corporation to provide evaluation,
37 fiscal management, and oversight of the Magic City
38 Children's Zone, Inc., and the Jacksonville Children's
39 Zone pilot projects; providing a contingent effective
40 date.

41
42 WHEREAS, the State of Florida is often referred to as the
43 Sunshine State, a term that suggests warm weather, a carefree
44 lifestyle, and unlimited potential for nurturing hope and
45 realizing dreams for a fulfilling and productive life, and

46 WHEREAS, communities within the state suffering from
47 fragile infrastructures and multiple social ills are home to
48 families for whom those obstacles limit, or completely preclude,
49 their ability to create a good quality of life for themselves
50 and for their children, and

51 WHEREAS, a proposed community initiative known as a
52 children's zone, which is modeled after the long-established and
53 successful Harlem Children's Zone, seeks to change that
54 experience, and

55 WHEREAS, the initiative will be based on the belief that in
56 order to help children from troubled communities become healthy

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57 adults and responsible, fulfilled members of their communities,
 58 two things must happen: first, they must be surrounded by a
 59 critical mass of adults who are effective parents engaged in
 60 activities with their children; and second, early in their
 61 lives, they must be exposed to sound health care, intellectual
 62 and social stimulation, and consistent guidance from loving,
 63 attentive adults, and

64 WHEREAS, the initiative seeks to establish a comprehensive,
 65 community-based, coordinated, and targeted system of strategies
 66 and services to revitalize communities with an increased sense
 67 of culture, pride, and togetherness, to support parents, and to
 68 provide comprehensive care for all children within the zone,
 69 NOW, THEREFORE,

70

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

72

73 Section 1. Section 409.147, Florida Statutes, is created
 74 to read:

75 409.147 Children's zones.--

76 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

77 (a) The Legislature finds that:

78 1. There are neighborhoods in the state where the
 79 infrastructure and opportunities that middle-class communities
 80 take for granted are nonexistent or so marginal that they are
 81 ineffective.

82 2. Children living in these neighborhoods are read to by
 83 an adult on a regular basis and attend a prekindergarten
 84 education program at a much lower rate than children in other

85 communities. These children experience below-average performance
86 on standardized tests and graduate from high school in fewer
87 numbers. Most of these children are eligible for the free or
88 reduced-price school lunch program.

89 3. Children in these neighborhoods often suffer from high
90 rates of asthma, a higher risk of lead poisoning, and inadequate
91 health care, and they are routinely exposed to violence and
92 crime.

93 4. In spite of these obstacles, these neighborhoods are
94 many times home to strong individuals and institutions that are
95 committed to making a difference in the lives of children and
96 their families.

97 (b) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to
98 assist disadvantaged areas within the state in creating a
99 community-based service network that develops, coordinates, and
100 provides quality education, accessible health care, youth
101 development programs, opportunities for employment, and safe and
102 affordable housing for children and families living within its
103 boundaries.

104 (2) POLICY AND PURPOSE.--It is the policy of this state to
105 provide the necessary means to assist local communities, the
106 children and families who live in those communities, and the
107 private sector in creating a sound educational, social, and
108 economic environment. To achieve this objective, the state
109 intends to provide investments sufficient to encourage community
110 partners to commit financial and other resources to severely
111 disadvantaged areas. The purpose of this section is to establish
112 a process that clearly identifies the severely disadvantaged

113 areas and provides guidance for developing a new social service
 114 paradigm that systematically coordinates programs that address
 115 the critical needs of children and their families and for
 116 directing efforts to rebuild the basic infrastructure of the
 117 community. The Legislature, therefore, declares the creation of
 118 children's zones, through the collaborative efforts of
 119 government and the private sector, to be a public purpose.

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

121 (a) "Governing body" means the commission or other
 122 legislative body charged with governing a county or
 123 municipality.

124 (b) "Ounce" means the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida,
 125 Inc.

126 (c) "Planning team" means a children's zone planning team
 127 established under this section.

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

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

135 (a) Adopts a resolution that:

136 1. Finds that an area exists in such county or
 137 municipality, or in the county and one or more municipalities,
 138 that chronically exhibits extreme and unacceptable levels of
 139 poverty, unemployment, physical deterioration, as well as
 140 limited access to quality educational, health care, and social

141 services.

142 2. Determines that the rehabilitation, conservation, or
 143 redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of the area is
 144 necessary in the interest of improving the health, wellness,
 145 education, living conditions, and livelihoods of the children
 146 and families who live in the county or municipality.

147 3. Determines that the revitalization of the area can
 148 occur only if the state and the private sector invest resources
 149 to improve infrastructure and the provision of services.

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

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

154 (d) Creates a corporation not for profit as provided in
 155 subsection (7).

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

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

160 (b) The planning team shall include residents and
 161 representatives from community-based organizations and other
 162 community institutions. At least half of the members of the
 163 planning team shall be residents.

164 (c) The planning team shall:

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

168 2. Develop a vision of what the children's zone will look

169 like when the challenges, problems, and opportunities in the
170 children's zone are successfully addressed.

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

173 4. Develop a strategic community plan consisting of goals,
174 objectives, tasks, the designation of responsible parties, the
175 identification of resources needed, timelines for implementation
176 of the plan, and procedures for monitoring outcomes.

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

179 1. Early development and care of children.

180 2. Education of children and youth.

181 3. Health and wellness.

182 4. Youth support.

183 5. Parent and guardian support.

184 6. Adult education, training, and jobs.

185 7. Community safety.

186 8. Housing and community development.

187 (6) CHILDREN'S ZONE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN.--After the
188 governing body adopts the resolution described in subsection
189 (4), the working groups shall develop objectives and identify
190 strategies for each focus area. The objectives, specified by
191 focus area, for a working group may include, but not be limited
192 to:

193 (a) Early development and care of children.

194 1. Providing resources to enable every child to be
195 adequately nurtured during the first 3 years of life.

196 2. Ensuring that all schools are ready for children and

197 all children are ready for school.

198 3. Facilitating enrollment in half-day or full-day
 199 prekindergarten for all 3-year old and 4-year old children.

200 4. Strengthening parent and guardian relationships with
 201 care providers.

202 5. Providing support and education for families and child
 203 care providers.

204 (b) Education of children and youth.

205 1. Increasing the level and degree of accountability of
 206 persons who are responsible for the development and well-being
 207 of all children in the children's zone.

208 2. Changing the structure and function of schools to
 209 increase the quality and amount of time spent on instruction and
 210 increase programmatic options and offerings.

211 3. Creating a safe and respectful environment for student
 212 learning.

213 4. Identifying and supporting points of alignment between
 214 the children's zone community plan and the school district's
 215 strategic plan.

216 (c) Health and wellness.

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

220 2. Eliminating health disparities between racial and
 221 cultural groups, including improving outcomes and increasing
 222 interventions.

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

- 225 4. Providing all children in the children's zone with
 226 access to safe structured and unstructured recreation.
- 227 (d) Youth support.
- 228 1. Increasing the high school graduation rate.
- 229 2. Increasing leadership development and employment
 230 opportunities for youth.
- 231 (e) Parent and guardian support.
- 232 1. Increasing parent and adult literacy.
- 233 2. Expanding access for parents to critical resources,
 234 such as jobs, transportation, day care, and after-school care.
- 235 3. Improving the effectiveness of the ways in which
 236 support systems communicate and collaborate with parents and the
 237 ways in which parents communicate and collaborate with support
 238 systems.
- 239 4. Making the services of the Healthy Families Florida
 240 program available to provide multiyear support to expectant
 241 parents and persons caring for infants and toddlers.
- 242 (f) Adult education, training, and jobs.
- 243 1. Creating job opportunities for adults that lead to
 244 career development.
- 245 2. Establishing a career and technical school or a
 246 satellite of such a school in the children's zone that includes
 247 a one-stop career center.
- 248 (g) Community safety.
- 249 1. Providing a safe environment for all children at home,
 250 in school, and in the community.
- 251 2. Eliminating the economic, political, and social forces
 252 that lead to a lack of safety within the family, the community,

253 schools, and institutional structures.

254 3. Assessing policies and practices, including sentencing,
 255 incarceration, detention, and data reporting, in order to reduce
 256 youth violence, crime, and recidivism.

257 (h) Housing and community development.

258 1. Strengthening the residential real estate market.

259 2. Building on existing efforts to promote socioeconomic
 260 diversity when developing a comprehensive land use strategic
 261 plan.

262 3. Promoting neighborhood beautification strategies.

263 (7) CHILDREN'S ZONE CORPORATION.--After the governing body
 264 adopts the resolution described in subsection (4), the county or
 265 municipality shall create a corporation not for profit which
 266 shall be registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in
 267 compliance with chapter 617. The purpose of the corporation is
 268 to facilitate fundraising, to secure broad community ownership
 269 of the children's zone, and, if the area selected by the
 270 governing body is designated as a children's zone, to:

271 (a) Begin to transfer responsibility for planning from the
 272 planning team to the corporation.

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

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

277 (a) There is created within the Liberty City neighborhood
 278 in Miami-Dade County a 10-year pilot project zone that, by
 279 November 1, 2008, shall be managed by an entity organized as a
 280 corporation not for profit which shall be registered,

281 incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance with chapter
282 617. The corporation shall be known as the Magic City Children's
283 Zone, Inc., and shall be administratively housed within the
284 Belafonte Tacolcy Center. However, Magic City Children's Zone,
285 Inc., is not subject to control, supervision, or direction by
286 the Belafonte Tacolcy Center in any manner. The Legislature
287 determines, however, that public policy dictates that the
288 corporation operate in the most open and accessible manner
289 consistent with its public purpose. Therefore, the Legislature
290 specifically declares that the corporation is subject to chapter
291 119, relating to public records, chapter 286, relating to public
292 meetings and records, and chapter 287, relating to procurement
293 of commodities or contractual services.

294 (b) This pilot project zone is designed to encompass an
295 area that is large enough to include all of the necessary
296 components of community life, including, but not limited to,
297 schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial
298 areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and
299 services to reach every willing member of the neighborhood.
300 Therefore, the geographic boundaries of the pilot project zone
301 are:

- 302 1. Northwest 79th Street to the north;
- 303 2. Northwest 36th Street to the south;
- 304 3. North Miami Avenue to the east; and
- 305 4. Northwest 27th Avenue to the west.

306 (c)1. The corporation shall be governed by a 15-member
307 board of directors. The board of directors shall consist of the
308 following members:

- 309 a. The chief executive officer of the Belafonte Tacolcy
 310 Center.
- 311 b. The executive director of the Carrie P. Meek
 312 Entrepreneurial Education Center, Miami-Dade College.
- 313 c. The director of the Parks and Recreation Department of
 314 the City of Miami.
- 315 d. The director of the Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center.
- 316 e. The chief executive officer of the Urban League of
 317 Greater Miami.
- 318 f. The director of the Liberty City Service Partnership.
- 319 g. The regional superintendent of the Miami-Dade County
 320 Public Schools.
- 321 h. The president of the Student Government Association of
 322 Northwestern High School.
- 323 i. The president of the Student Government Association of
 324 Edison High School.
- 325 j. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association
 326 of Northwestern High School.
- 327 k. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association
 328 of Edison High School.
- 329 1. Four members from the local private business sector, to
 330 be appointed by a majority vote of the members designated in
 331 sub-subparagraphs a.-k., all of whom must have significant
 332 experience in one of the focus areas specified in subsection
 333 (6).
- 334 2. All members of the board of directors shall be
 335 appointed no later than 90 days following the incorporation of
 336 the Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., and:

- 337 a. Eleven members initially appointed pursuant to this
338 paragraph shall each serve a 4-year term.
- 339 b. The remaining initial four appointees shall each serve
340 a 2-year term.
- 341 c. Each member appointed thereafter shall serve a 4-year
342 term.
- 343 d. A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which
344 the original appointment was made, and a member appointed to
345 fill a vacancy shall serve for the remainder of that term.
- 346 e. A member may not serve more than 8 years in consecutive
347 terms.
- 348 3. The board of directors shall annually elect a
349 chairperson and a vice chairperson from among the board's
350 members. The members may, by a vote of eight members, remove a
351 member from the position of chairperson or vice chairperson
352 before the expiration of his or her term as chairperson or vice
353 chairperson. His or her successor shall be elected to serve for
354 the balance of the term of the chairperson or vice chairperson
355 who was removed.
- 356 4. The board of directors shall meet at least four times
357 each year upon the call of the chairperson, at the request of
358 the vice chairperson, or at the request of a majority of the
359 membership. A majority of the membership constitutes a quorum.
360 The board of directors may take official action by a majority
361 vote of the members present at any meeting at which a quorum is
362 present. The board may conduct its meetings through
363 teleconferences or other similar means.
- 364 5. A member of the board of directors may be removed by a

365 majority of the membership. Absence from three consecutive
366 meetings results in automatic removal.

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

371 7. The corporation shall create a standing advisory board
372 to assist in any part of its delegated duties. The membership of
373 the standing advisory board shall reflect the expertise
374 necessary for the implementation of the children's zone pilot
375 project.

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

377 a. Adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws necessary to
378 govern its activities.

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

381 c. Begin the implementation and governance of the
382 children's zone community plan.

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

387 (d) Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., shall submit an
388 annual report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of
389 the House of Representatives by January 31, 2009, and by January
390 31 of each year thereafter, which shall include a comprehensive
391 and detailed report of its operations, activities, and
392 accomplishments for the prior year as well as its goals for the

393 current year. The initial report shall also include information
 394 concerning the status of the development of a business plan.

395 (9) CREATION OF JACKSONVILLE CHILDREN'S ZONE PILOT
 396 PROJECT.--

397 (a) There is created within the Grand Park/New Town
 398 Neighborhood in the City of Jacksonville a 10-year-pilot project
 399 zone that, by November 1, 2008, shall be managed by an entity
 400 organized as a corporation not for profit which shall be
 401 registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance
 402 with chapter 617. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection
 403 (7), a request for proposals shall be issued to identify an
 404 existing qualified, not-for-profit corporation to implement the
 405 program. The Legislature determines, however, that public policy
 406 dictates that the corporation operate in the most open and
 407 accessible manner consistent with its public purpose. Therefore,
 408 the Legislature specifically declares that the corporation is
 409 subject to chapter 119, relating to public records, chapter 286,
 410 relating to public meetings and records, and chapter 287,
 411 relating to procurement of commodities or contractual services.

412 (b) This pilot project zone is designed to encompass an
 413 area that is large enough to include all of the necessary
 414 components of community life, including, but not limited to,
 415 schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial
 416 areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and
 417 services to reach every willing member of the neighborhood.
 418 Therefore, the geographic boundaries of the pilot project zone
 419 are:

420 1. West 21st Street to the north;

- 421 2. West Beaver Street to the south;
 422 3. Myrtle Avenue, Kings Road, and Canal Street to the
 423 east; and
 424 4. Division Street and CSX Railroad to the west.
 425 (c) The Jacksonville Children's Zone shall be managed by
 426 the selected not-for-profit corporation.
 427 (d) The corporation shall enter into a contract with a
 428 management consultant who has experience working with social
 429 service and educational entities for the purpose of developing a
 430 10-year comprehensive business plan to carry out the provisions
 431 of this subsection.
 432 (e) To assist with such management, an oversight committee
 433 shall be created within the not-for-profit corporation that may
 434 include, but is not limited to, the following members:
 435 1. The president of Edward Waters College.
 436 2. The principal of Smart Pope Livingston Elementary
 437 School.
 438 3. The principal of Eugene Butler Middle School.
 439 4. The principal of Grand Park Alternative School.
 440 5. A representative of the Northwest Citizens Planning
 441 Advisory Committee, District 5.
 442 6. A business representative from the Jacksonville
 443 Children's Zone.
 444 7. A representative of a faith-based organization that
 445 operates in the Jacksonville Children's Zone.
 446 8. A youth member who lives in the Jacksonville Children's
 447 Zone.
 448 9. A parent or guardian who lives in the Jacksonville

449 Children's Zone.

450 10. The director of the Jacksonville Children's
 451 Commission.

452 11. The director of the Recreation and Community Services
 453 Department of the City of Jacksonville.

454 12. The director of the Duval County Health Department.

455 13. A representative of the Department of Children and
 456 Family Services.

457 14. Three additional members who may or may not live in
 458 the Jacksonville Children's Zone.

459 (f) The Jacksonville Children's Zone shall submit an
 460 annual report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of
 461 the House of Representatives by January 31, 2009, and by January
 462 31 of each year thereafter, which shall include a comprehensive
 463 and detailed report of operations, activities, and
 464 accomplishments for the prior year as well as its goals for the
 465 current year. The initial report shall also include information
 466 concerning the status of the development of a business plan.

467 Section 2. The Department of Children and Family Services
 468 shall contract with an existing private not-for-profit
 469 corporation incorporated for the purpose of identifying,
 470 funding, supporting, and evaluating programs and community
 471 initiatives to improve the development and life outcomes of
 472 children and to preserve and strengthen families with a primary
 473 emphasis on education and community support. The existing
 474 private not-for-profit corporation shall be responsible for the
 475 evaluation, fiscal management, and oversight of the Magic City

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476 Children's Zone, Inc., and the Jacksonville Children's Zone
477 pilot projects.

478 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008,
479 subject to a specific appropriation to provide a grant for a 3-
480 year period for the purpose of implementing this act, which
481 includes contracting with a not-for-profit corporation for the
482 development of a business plan and for the evaluation, fiscal
483 management, and oversight of the Magic City Children's Zone,
484 Inc., and Jacksonville Children's Zone pilot projects.