

By Senator Bullard

39-00507-08

2008500__

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; requiring the Department of
26 Children and Family Services to contract with certain
27 private nonprofit corporations for specified purposes;
28 requiring the corporation to implement the Magic City
29 Children's Zone, Inc., pilot project; providing

39-00507-08

2008500__

30 appropriations; providing an effective date.

31

32 WHEREAS, the State of Florida is often referred to as the
33 Sunshine State, a term that suggests warm weather, a carefree
34 lifestyle, and unlimited potential for nurturing hope and
35 realizing dreams for a fulfilling and productive life, and

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

41 WHEREAS, a proposed community initiative known as a
42 children's zone, which is modeled after the long-established and
43 successful Harlem Children's Zone, seeks to change that
44 experience, and

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

54 WHEREAS, the initiative seeks to establish a comprehensive,
55 community-based, coordinated, and targeted system of strategies
56 and services to revitalize communities with an increased sense of
57 culture, pride, and togetherness, to support parents, and to
58 provide comprehensive care for all children within the zone, NOW,

39-00507-08

2008500__

59 THEREFORE,

60

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

62

63 Section 1. Section 409.147, Florida Statutes, is created to
64 read:

65 409.147 Children's zones.--

66 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

67 (a) The Legislature finds that:

68 1. There are neighborhoods in the state where the
69 infrastructure and opportunities that middle-class communities
70 take for granted are nonexistent or so marginal that they are
71 ineffective.

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

79 3. Children in these neighborhoods often suffer from high
80 rates of asthma, a higher risk of lead poisoning, and inadequate
81 health care, and they are routinely exposed to violence and
82 crime.

83 4. In spite of these obstacles, these neighborhoods are
84 many times home to strong individuals and institutions that are
85 committed to making a difference in the lives of children and
86 their families.

87 (b) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to assist

39-00507-08

2008500__

88 disadvantaged areas within the state in creating a community-
89 based service network that develops, coordinates, and provides
90 quality education, accessible health care, youth development
91 programs, opportunities for employment, and safe and affordable
92 housing for children and families living within its boundaries.

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

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

110 (a) "Governing body" means the commission or other
111 legislative body charged with governing a county or municipality.

112 (b) "Ounce" means the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida,
113 Inc.

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

116 (d) "Resident" means a person who lives or operates a small

39-00507-08

2008500__

117 community-based business or organization within the boundaries of
118 the children's zone.

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

123 (a) Adopts a resolution that:

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

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

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

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

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

141 (d) Creates a corporation not for profit as provided in
142 subsection (7).

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

144 (a) After the governing body adopts the resolution
145 described in subsection (4), the county or municipality shall

39-00507-08

2008500__

146 establish a children's zone planning team.

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

151 (c) The planning team shall:

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

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

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

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

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

166 1. Early development and care of children.

167 2. Education of children and youth.

168 3. Health and wellness.

169 4. Youth support.

170 5. Parent and guardian support.

171 6. Adult education, training, and jobs.

172 7. Community safety.

173 8. Housing and community development.

174 (6) CHILDREN'S ZONE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN.--After the

39-00507-08

2008500__

175 governing body adopts the resolution described in subsection (4),
176 the working groups shall develop objectives and identify
177 strategies for each focus area. The objectives, specified by
178 focus area, for a working group may include, but not be limited
179 to:

180 (a) Early development and care of children.

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

183 2. Ensuring that all schools are ready for children and all
184 children are ready for school.

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

187 4. Strengthening parent and guardian relationships with
188 care providers.

189 5. Providing support and education for families and child
190 care providers.

191 (b) Education of children and youth.

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

195 2. Changing the structure and function of schools to
196 increase the quality and amount of time spent on instruction and
197 increase programmatic options and offerings.

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

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

203 (c) Health and wellness.

39-00507-08

2008500__

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

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

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

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

214 (d) Youth support.

215 1. Increasing the high school graduation rate.

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

218 (e) Parent and guardian support.

219 1. Increasing parent and adult literacy.

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

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

225 4. Making the services of the Healthy Families Florida
226 program available to provide multiyear support to expectant
227 parents and persons caring for infants and toddlers.

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

229 1. Creating job opportunities for adults that lead to
230 career development.

231 2. Establishing a career and technical school, or a
232 satellite of such a school in the children's zone, which includes

39-00507-08

2008500__

- 233 | a one-stop career center.
- 234 | (g) Community safety.
- 235 | 1. Providing a safe environment for all children at home,
- 236 | in school, and in the community.
- 237 | 2. Eliminating the economic, political, and social forces
- 238 | that lead to a lack of safety within the family, the community,
- 239 | schools, and institutional structures.
- 240 | 3. Assessing policies and practices, including sentencing,
- 241 | incarceration, detention, and data reporting, in order to reduce
- 242 | youth violence, crime, and recidivism.
- 243 | (h) Housing and community development.
- 244 | 1. Strengthening the residential real estate market.
- 245 | 2. Building on existing efforts to promote socioeconomic
- 246 | diversity when developing a comprehensive land use strategic
- 247 | plan.
- 248 | 3. Promoting neighborhood beautification strategies.
- 249 | (7) CHILDREN'S ZONE CORPORATION.--After the governing body
- 250 | adopts the resolution described in subsection (4), the county or
- 251 | municipality shall create a corporation not for profit which
- 252 | shall be registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in
- 253 | compliance with chapter 617. The purpose of the corporation is to
- 254 | facilitate fundraising, to secure broad community ownership of
- 255 | the children's zone, and, if the area selected by the governing
- 256 | body is designated as a children's zone, to:
- 257 | (a) Begin to transfer responsibility for planning from the
- 258 | planning team to the corporation.
- 259 | (b) Begin the implementation and governance of the
- 260 | children's zone community plan.
- 261 | (8) CREATION OF MAGIC CITY CHILDREN'S ZONE, INC., PILOT

39-00507-08

2008500__

262 PROJECT.--

263 (a) There is created within the Liberty City neighborhood
264 in Miami-Dade County a 10-year pilot project zone that, by
265 November 1, 2008, shall be managed by an entity organized as a
266 corporation not for profit which shall be registered,
267 incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance with chapter
268 617. The corporation shall be known as the Magic City Children's
269 Zone, Inc., and shall be administratively housed within the
270 Belafonte Tacolcy Center. However, Magic City Children's Zone,
271 Inc., is not subject to control, supervision, or direction by the
272 Belafonte Tacolcy Center in any manner. The Legislature
273 determines, however, that public policy dictates that the
274 corporation operate in the most open and accessible manner
275 consistent with its public purpose. Therefore, the Legislature
276 specifically declares that the corporation is subject to chapter
277 119, relating to public records, chapter 286, relating to public
278 meetings and records, and chapter 287, relating to procurement of
279 commodities or contractual services.

280 (b) This pilot project zone is designed to encompass an
281 area that is large enough to include all of the necessary
282 components of community life, including, but not limited to,
283 schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial
284 areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and
285 services to reach every willing member of the neighborhood.
286 Therefore, the geographic boundaries of the pilot project zone
287 are:

- 288 1. Northwest 79th Street to the north;
- 289 2. Northwest 36th Street to the south;
- 290 3. North Miami Avenue to the east; and

39-00507-08

2008500__

- 291 4. Northwest 27th Avenue to the west.
- 292 (c)1. The corporation shall be governed by a 15-member
293 board of directors. The board of directors shall consist of the
294 following members:
- 295 a. The chief executive officer of the Belafonte Tacolcy
296 Center.
- 297 b. The executive director of the Carrie P. Meek
298 Entrepreneurial Education Center, Miami-Dade College.
- 299 c. The director of the Parks and Recreation Department of
300 the City of Miami.
- 301 d. The director of the Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center.
- 302 e. The chief executive officer of the Urban League of
303 Greater Miami.
- 304 f. The director of the Liberty City Service Partnership.
- 305 g. The regional superintendent of the Miami-Dade County
306 Public Schools.
- 307 h. The president of the Student Government Association of
308 Northwestern High School.
- 309 i. The president of the Student Government Association of
310 Edison High School.
- 311 j. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association
312 of Northwestern High School.
- 313 k. The president of the Parent Teacher Student Association
314 of Edison High School.
- 315 1. Four members from the local private business sector, to
316 be appointed by a majority vote of the members designated in sub-
317 subparagraphs a.-k., all of whom must have significant experience
318 in one of the focus areas specified in subsection (6).
- 319 2. All members of the board of directors shall be appointed

39-00507-08

2008500__

320 no later than 90 days following the incorporation of the Magic
321 City Children's Zone, Inc., and:

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

324 b. The remaining initial four appointees shall each serve a
325 2-year term.

326 c. Each member appointed thereafter shall serve a 4-year
327 term.

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

331 e. A member may not serve more than 8 years in consecutive
332 terms.

333 3. The board of directors shall annually elect a
334 chairperson and a vice chairperson from among the board's
335 members. The members may, by a vote of eight members, remove a
336 member from the position of chairperson or vice chairperson
337 before the expiration of his or her term as chairperson or vice
338 chairperson. His or her successor shall be elected to serve for
339 the balance of the term of the chairperson or vice chairperson
340 who was removed.

341 4. The board of directors shall meet at least four times
342 each year upon the call of the chairperson, at the request of the
343 vice chairperson, or at the request of a majority of the
344 membership. A majority of the membership constitutes a quorum.
345 The board of directors may take official action by a majority
346 vote of the members present at any meeting at which a quorum is
347 present. The board may conduct its meetings through
348 teleconferences or other similar means.

39-00507-08

2008500__

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

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

356 7. The corporation shall create a standing advisory board
357 to assist in any part of its delegated duties. The membership of
358 the standing advisory board shall reflect the expertise necessary
359 for the implementation of the children's zone pilot project.

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

361 a. Adopt articles of incorporation and bylaws necessary to
362 govern its activities.

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

365 c. Begin the implementation and governance of the
366 children's zone community plan.

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

371 (d) Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., shall submit an
372 annual report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of
373 the House of Representatives by January 31, 2009, and by January
374 31 of each year thereafter, which shall include a comprehensive
375 and detailed report of its operations, activities, and
376 accomplishments for the prior year as well as its goals for the
377 current year. The initial report shall also include information

39-00507-08

2008500__

378 concerning the status of the development of a business plan.

379 Section 2. The Department of Children and Family Services
380 shall contract with an existing private nonprofit corporation,
381 incorporated for the purpose of identifying, funding, supporting,
382 and evaluating programs and community initiatives to improve the
383 development and life outcomes of children and to preserve and
384 strengthen families with a primary emphasis on education and
385 community support. The existing private nonprofit corporation
386 shall implement the Magic City Children's Zone, Inc., pilot
387 project.

388 Section 3. The sum of \$3.6 million in nonrecurring revenue
389 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund and the sum of
390 \$28,362 in nonrecurring revenue is appropriated from the Tobacco
391 Settlement Trust Fund to the Department of Children and Families
392 for the 2008-2009 fiscal year as a grant for a 3-year period for
393 the purposes of implementing this act, which includes contracting
394 with a nonprofit corporation for the development of a business
395 plan and for the evaluation, fiscal management, and oversight of
396 the pilot program.

397 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.