

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee

BILL: SB 638

INTRODUCER: Senator Hays

SUBJECT: Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority

DATE: November 28, 2011 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Jenkins	Roberts	GO	Pre-meeting
2.			CJ	
3.			BC	
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

This bill repeals the following sections of the Florida Statutes:

- Section 860.151, F.S., (Short title);
- Section 860.152, F.S., (Purpose);
- Section 860.153, F.S., (Definitions);
- Section 860.154, F.S., (Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority);
- Section 860.155, F.S., (Compensation of members);
- Section 860.156, F.S., (Personnel);
- Section 860.157, F.S., (Powers and duties of the authority); and
- Section 860.158, F.S., (Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority Expenditures).

The bill also amends s. 713.78, F.S., (Liens for recovering, towing, or storing vehicles and vessels) to remove a reference to the Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority.

II. Present Situation:

In 1992, the Legislature created the Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Act (Act).¹ The purpose of the Act was to prevent, combat, and reduce motor vehicle theft in Florida, and to improve and support the law enforcement, prosecution, and administration of motor vehicle theft laws.² The Act also established the Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority (Authority), within the Department of Legal Affairs.³

¹ Chapter 1992-145, L.O.F.

² Section 860.152, F.S.

³ Section 860.154, F.S.

Powers and Duties of the Authority

The powers and duties of the Authority include:

- Applying for, soliciting, receiving, establishing priorities for, allocating, disbursing, contracting for, and spending funds that are made available to the Authority from any source to effectuate the purposes of the Act;
- Assessing the scope of the problem of motor vehicle theft;
- Developing and sponsoring the implementation of statewide plans and strategies to combat motor vehicle theft and to improve the administration of the motor vehicle theft laws and provide an effective forum for identification of critical problems associated with motor vehicle theft;
- Coordinating the development, adoption, and implementation of plans and strategies relating to interagency or intergovernmental cooperation with respect to motor vehicle theft law enforcement; and
- Providing an annual report on the activities of the Authority to specified entities.⁴

Membership of the Authority

The powers and duties of the Authority are vested in and exercised by a Board of Directors (Board), established within the Authority, which includes the following members:

- The Chief Financial Officer or his or her designee;
- The executive director of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles;
- The executive director of the Department of Law Enforcement; and
- Six additional members, each of whom are appointed by the Attorney General as follows: a state attorney or city or county executive, a chief executive law enforcement official, a sheriff, one representative of companies authorized to sell motor vehicle insurance, one representative of insurers authorized to write motor vehicle insurance in this state, and one representative of purchasers of motor vehicle insurance in this state who is not employed by or connected with the business of insurance.⁵

Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund

In addition to the Authority, the Act created the Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Trust Fund (Trust Fund).⁶ The Trust Fund was funded pursuant to s. 320.08046, F.S., which appropriated 18 percent of a \$1 license tax⁷ surcharge (vehicle registration fee) to the Trust Fund.⁸ Trust Fund dollars were required to be used to:

- Pay the Authority's cost to administer the Board and the Trust Fund; and
- Achieve the purposes and objectives of the Act.⁹

⁴ Section 860.157, F.S.

⁵ Section 860.154, F.S.

⁶ Chapter 1992-145, L.O.F.

⁷ Section 320.08, F.S., imposes license taxes.

⁸ In 1992, s. 320.08045, F.S., imposed a 50 cent surcharge on each license tax, which was deposited into the Trust Fund. This statute was repealed in 1995. That same year, s. 320.08046, F.S., was amended to revise the surcharge on license taxes and to provide guidelines for surcharge distribution to the Trust Fund. *See* ch. 1992-145, L.O.F., and ch. 1995-267, L.O.F.

⁹ Chapter 1992-145, L.O.F.

In 2003, the Legislature terminated the Trust Fund and amended s. 320.08046, F.S., to remove the language appropriating 18 percent of the \$1 license tax surcharge to the Trust Fund.¹⁰ As a result, the Authority has not been funded since 2003.¹¹ According to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), the OAG has not administered the Authority since funding was eliminated. However, statutes relating to the Authority still exist, despite the program not being operational.

Auto theft is much less prevalent today than it was in 1992 when the Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority was established.¹² In fact, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement reports that the occurrence of auto theft in Florida has decreased by nearly fifty percent since 2003 when the Authority stopped operating.¹³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill repeals statutes relating to the Authority. Specifically, the bill repeals the following provisions:

- Section 860.151, F.S., (Short title);
- Section 860.152, F.S., (Purpose);
- Section 860.153, F.S., (Definitions);
- Section 860.154, F.S., (Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority);
- Section 860.155, F.S., (Compensation of members);
- Section 860.156, F.S., (Personnel);
- Section 860.157, F.S., (Powers and duties of the authority); and
- Section 860.158, F.S., (Florida Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Authority Expenditures).

The bill also makes a conforming change to s. 713.78, F.S., (Liens for recovering, towing, or storing vehicles and vessels), to delete a reference to s. 860.158, F.S.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

¹⁰ Chapter 2003-179, L.O.F.

¹¹ Verified by Senate Budget Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice Appropriations.

¹² There were 105,553 auto theft incidents reported in 1992, compared to 41,433 in 2010. *See* Florida Statistical Analysis Center: FDLE (1989-2010), Crime in Florida, Florida Uniform Crime Report.

¹³ There were 81,536 auto theft incidents reported in 2003. *Id.*

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.