

**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.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

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BILL: SB 1322

INTRODUCER: Senator Gibson and others

SUBJECT: Children's Initiatives

DATE: March 27, 2013

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Preston	Hendon	CF	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
2.	_____	_____	CA	_____
3.	_____	_____	AP	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1322 codifies in two Florida children's initiatives that are currently in existence and that have been designated by the Ounce of Prevention Fund (Ounce) as a Florida children's initiative pursuant to s. 409.147, F.S.:

- The "New Town Success Zone" in Jacksonville; and
- The "Parramore Kidz Zone" in Orlando.

This bill provides that the initiatives are subject to Florida public records laws, public meeting laws, and procurement laws, and that the initiatives are designed to encompass an area large enough to include all necessary components of community life, but small enough to reach every member of each neighborhood who is willing to participate.

This bill also requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF or department) and the Miami Children's Initiative (MCI) to contract with a not-for-profit corporation to work in collaboration with the governing body to adopt the resolution, establish the planning team, and adopt the strategic community plan required by law to be designated as a children's initiative.

This bill is anticipated to have no fiscal impact on the state and has an effective date of July 1, 2013.

This bill substantially amends section 409.147 of the Florida Statutes.

## II. Present Situation:

### Harlem Children's Zone

The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) began in 1970 as an organization working with young children and their families as the city's first truancy-prevention program.<sup>1</sup> In the early 1990s, the HCZ ran a pilot project that brought a range of support services to a single block. The idea was to address all the problems that poor families were facing including crumbling apartments, failing schools, violent crime, and chronic health problems.<sup>2</sup>

Believing that for children to do well, their families have to do well, and for families to do well, their community must do well, the HCZ works to strengthen families as well as empowering them to have a positive impact on their children's development. The two fundamental principles of the HCZ are to help kids in a sustained way, starting as early in their lives as possible, and to create a critical mass of adults around them who understand what it takes to help children succeed.<sup>3</sup>

The HCZ Project began as a one-block pilot in the 1990s, then following a 10-year business plan to ensure its best-practice programs were operating as planned, it expanded to 24 blocks, then 60 blocks, then ultimately 97 blocks. The HCZ became a model among nonprofits that began carefully evaluating and tracking the results of their work. Those evaluation results enabled staff to see if programs were achieving their objectives and to take corrective actions if they were not.<sup>4</sup>

### Children's Zones in Florida

Using the Harlem Children's Zone as a model, the Legislature created children's zones in Florida in 2008.<sup>5</sup> The stated policy and purpose for the zones was:

It is the policy of this state to provide the necessary means to assist local communities, the children and families who live in those communities, and the private sector in creating a sound educational, social, and economic environment. To achieve this objective, the state intends to provide investments sufficient to encourage community partners to commit financial and other resources to severely disadvantaged areas. The purpose of this section is to establish a process that clearly identifies the severely disadvantaged areas and provides guidance for developing a new social service paradigm that systematically coordinates programs that address the critical needs of children and their families and for directing efforts to rebuild the basic infrastructure of the

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<sup>1</sup> Harlem Children's Zone, available at <http://www.hcz.org/index.php/about-us/history> (last visited March 20, 2013). The organization was then known as Rheedlen.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Harlem Children's Zone, available at <http://www.hcz.org/index.php/about-us/the-hcz-project> (last visited March 20, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Chapter 2008-96, Laws of Fla. In 2009, the term "children's zone" was changed to "children's initiative." Shortly after the 2008 legislation was signed into law, the HCZ notified the Florida Legislature that they had trademarked the term "children's zone" and the state was no longer able to use the term. Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

community. The Legislature, therefore, declares the creation of children's zones, through the collaborative efforts of government and the private sector, to be a public purpose.<sup>6</sup>

The 2008 legislation<sup>7</sup> and the amending 2009 legislation<sup>8</sup> relating to children's initiatives also contained the following provisions:

- Created a nominating process for areas within communities to be designated as children's zones,<sup>9</sup> provides for the creation of a planning team, a strategic community plan, and focus areas to be included in the plan;
- Required the creation of a not for profit corporation to implement and govern a designated children's zone;
- Created a ten-year project within the Liberty City neighborhood in Miami to be known as the Miami Children's Initiative (MCI); and
- Required the department to contract with an existing private nonprofit corporation, incorporated for certain specified purposes, to implement the newly created Miami Children's Initiative.<sup>10</sup>

### **Miami Children's Initiative**

The idea for the Miami Children's Initiative dates back to 2006, when a group of Liberty City community leaders, local politicians and residents came together to try and determine possible solutions to perceived problems in the community. Liberty City was once a thriving neighborhood for many African Americans, but the high concentration of low-income housing projects, the exit of the area's businesses, increased joblessness, low performing schools, growing poverty, crime, juvenile delinquency, drugs and poor health had eroded the quality of life.<sup>11</sup>

Creation of the MCI in 2008 brought residents and local business people, as well as leaders in health care, education and human services, together to begin to formulate the foundation for this community-wide initiative. That extensive planning – professionally facilitated via 43 work groups and 18 focus groups – led to a plan and a strategy to achieve progress toward a “prosperous Liberty City.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

<sup>9</sup> Section 409.147, F.S., provides that a county or municipality or other designated area may apply to the Ounce to designate an area as a children's initiative. The area must first adopt a resolution stating that the area has issues related to poverty, that changes are necessary for the area to improve, and that resources are necessary for revitalization of the area. The county or municipality must then establish a children's initiative planning team and develop and adapt a strategic community plan. Once a county or municipality has completed these steps, they must create a not-for-profit corporation to facilitate fundraising and secure broad community ownership of the children's initiative. The Ounce is a private, nonprofit corporation dedicated to shaping prevention policy and investing in innovative prevention programs that provide measurable benefits to Florida's children, families and communities.

<sup>10</sup> Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

<sup>11</sup> Miami Children's Initiative, available at [http://www.miamichildrensinitiative.org/aboutus\\_whoweare.shtml](http://www.miamichildrensinitiative.org/aboutus_whoweare.shtml) (last visited March 21, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

### **New Town Success Zone**

After review of a number of Jacksonville neighborhoods, the New Town community was selected by community leadership of Jacksonville in 2008 as the site for a Florida children's initiative.<sup>13</sup> In 2009, a strategic plan was developed and work began on the New Town Success Zone.<sup>14</sup> The initiative aims to assist parents and caregivers, business leaders, professionals, residents, teachers and other stakeholders create a safe environment and pipeline to success for children residing in the New Town area.<sup>15</sup> The New Town Success Zone has reported higher FCAT scores, an improvement in school promotion rates, and a reduction in violent crimes, theft and truancy since 2008.<sup>16</sup>

### **Parramore Kidz Zone**

The Parramore Kidz Zone was launched by the City of Orlando on July 1, 2006 as part of a comprehensive effort to revitalize Orlando's highest crime, highest poverty neighborhood. The Parramore Kidz Zone replicates some aspects of the Harlem Children's Zone to create positive child-rearing conditions that will result in lower teen pregnancy rates, improved school performance, and decreased juvenile crime and child abuse rates. The Parramore Kidz Zone was implemented by a coalition of nonprofit organizations and neighborhood residents and was designated by the Ounce as a Florida children's initiative in June 2009.<sup>17</sup> The initiative was designed to invest in those things that make a difference in children's lives, such as quality early childhood education, after school programs, programs that build family economic success, youth development programs for teenagers, access to health care, and mentoring.<sup>18</sup> Since 2006, the Parramore neighborhood has seen increased test scores and decreased juvenile arrest rates.<sup>19</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

Florida children's initiatives were created to assist disadvantaged areas within the state in creating a community-based service network that develops, coordinates, and provides quality education, accessible health care, youth development programs, opportunities for employment, and safe and affordable housing for children and families living within its boundaries. There are currently three Florida children's initiatives, the Miami Children's Initiative, Inc., the New Town Success Zone, and Parramore Kidz Zone. The Miami Children's Initiative, Inc. is the only initiative codified.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The New Town Success Zone, available at: <http://www.newtownsuccesszone.com/why.html> (last visited March 21, 2013).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> New Town Success Zone Five Year Report to the Community, The New Town Success Zone, available at <http://www.newtownsuccesszone.com/5year.html> (last visited March 21, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, Parramore Kidz Zone, available at [http://www.ounce.org/Orlando\\_CI.html](http://www.ounce.org/Orlando_CI.html) (last visited March 22, 2013).

<sup>18</sup> City of Orlando, Parramore Kidz Zone, available at <http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/Html/Children/pkz.htm> (last visited March 22, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> Section 409.147, F.S.

Section 1 of the bill codifies two existing children's initiatives:

- The New Town Success Zone in Council District 9 in Duval County – Jacksonville; and
- The Parramore Kidz Zone in Orange County – Orlando.

In addition, section 1 of the bill provides:

- Both initiatives must be managed by a not-for-profit corporation, in accordance with ch. 617, F.S.;
- The corporation is subject to ch. 119, F.S., relating to public records, ch. 286, F.S., relating to public meetings and records, and ch. 287, F.S., relating to procurement of commodities or contractual services. These requirements are consistent with existing law relating to the Miami Children's Initiative;
- Clarifies that the "New Town Success Zone" and the "Parramore Kidz Zone" are not subject to control, supervision, or direction by any department of the state in any manner;
- Both initiatives are designed to encompass an area that is large enough to include all of the necessary components of community life, including, but not limited to, schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and services to reach every member of the neighborhood who is willing to participate in the project; and
- The department and the Miami Children's Initiative are required to contract with a not-for-profit corporation to work in collaboration with the governing body to adopt the resolution, establish the planning team, and adopt the strategic community plan required by law to be designated as a children's initiative.

Section 2 of the bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2013.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

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:**

Section 409.147(9), F.S., was enacted in 2009 in order to provide for the implementation of the Miami Children's Initiative.<sup>21</sup> At that time an appropriation was provided and the Ounce provided direction and oversight for the project. Proviso language in the 2008-2009 General Appropriations Act (GAA) provided \$3.6 million in non-recurring general revenue funds for the MCI. The Ounce was designated as the agent to develop a business plan and for the evaluation, fiscal management, and oversight of the pilot program. The funds were intended to be used as a grant over a three-year period to carry out activities in the zones.<sup>22</sup> The department developed a three-year non-renewable contract with the Ounce with the first monthly payment being made in August 2008.

Lines 80-82 of the bill amend s. 409.147(9), F.S., to require the department and the Miami Children's Initiative to contract with a not-for-profit corporation to work in collaboration with the governing body to adopt the resolution, establish the planning team, and adopt the strategic community plan required by law to be designated as a children's initiative. It is unclear why the MCI **and** the department would be required to contract with a not-for-profit corporation to implement the law.

**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.

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

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<sup>21</sup> Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

<sup>22</sup> S. 3, General Appropriations Act of 2008, 2008-152 Laws of Fla.