

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to sexual predator and sexual offender absconders; creating s. 943.04355, F.S.; providing legislative findings; creating the Sexual Predator and Sexual Offender Absconder Strike Force within the Department of Law Enforcement; providing definitions; providing for the membership and terms of the strike force; requiring the department to provide administrative services to the strike force; requiring the strike force to organize by a specified date; providing for meetings; specifying the duties of the strike force; requiring an annual report to the Governor and Legislature; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 943.04355, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

943.04355 Sexual Predator and Sexual Offender Absconder Strike Force.—

(1) FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that there is a need to locate and arrest registered sexual predators and sexual offenders who are under the supervision of the Department of Corrections and who have absconded from such supervision.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is created the Sexual Predator

27 and Sexual Offender Absconder Strike Force within the
28 department. The purpose of the strike force is to develop and
29 prioritize coordinated strategies for the apprehension of
30 registered sexual predators and sexual offenders who are under
31 the supervision of the Department of Corrections and who have
32 absconded from such supervision.

33 (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

34 (a) "Sexual offender" means a person required to register
35 as a sexual offender under s. 943.0435 or s. 944.607.

36 (b) "Sexual predator" means a person required to register
37 as a sexual predator under s. 775.21.

38 (4) MEMBERSHIP.—The strike force shall consist of the
39 following 10 members or their designees:

40 (a) The executive director of the department, who shall
41 serve as chair.

42 (b) The Secretary of Corrections, who shall serve as vice
43 chair.

44 (c) The Secretary of Juvenile Justice.

45 (d) The chair of the Parole Commission.

46 (e) The executive director of the Department of Highway
47 Safety and Motor Vehicles.

48 (f) Five members appointed by the executive director,
49 consisting of two sheriffs, two chiefs of police, and one state
50 attorney. In making these appointments, the executive director
51 shall consider representation by geography, population,
52 ethnicity, and other relevant factors in order to ensure that

53 the membership of the strike force is representative of the
54 state as a whole.

55 (5) TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP; COMPENSATION; ADMINISTRATIVE
56 SERVICES.—

57 (a) The five members appointed by the executive director
58 shall be appointed to 4-year terms; however, for the purpose of
59 providing staggered terms of the initial appointments, two
60 members shall be appointed to a 2-year term, two members shall
61 be appointed to a 3-year term, and one member shall be appointed
62 to a 4-year term. Each of the remaining members is a standing
63 member of the strike force and may not serve beyond the time he
64 or she holds the position that was the basis for the membership.
65 A vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original
66 appointment but only for the remainder of the term.

67 (b) The Legislature finds that the strike force serves a
68 legitimate state, county, and municipal purpose and that service
69 on the strike force is consistent with a member's principal
70 service in public office or employment. Therefore, membership on
71 the strike force does not disqualify a member from holding any
72 other public office or from being employed by a public entity,
73 except that a member of the Legislature may not serve on the
74 strike force.

75 (c) Members of the strike force shall serve without
76 compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and
77 travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061.

78 (d) The department shall provide administrative and

79 support services for the strike force.

80 (6) MEETINGS.—The strike force shall organize by December
81 31, 2014. Thereafter, the strike force shall meet at least four
82 times per year. Additional meetings may be held if the chair
83 determines that extraordinary circumstances require an
84 additional meeting. At least one meeting must be held via
85 teleconference. Members may appear at meetings by electronic
86 means. A majority of the members of the strike force constitutes
87 a quorum.

88 (7) DUTIES.—The strike force shall coordinate with the
89 Department of Corrections and local law enforcement agencies to:

90 (a)1. Develop and review a statewide list of known sexual
91 predator and sexual offender absconders.

92 2. Identify the statewide challenges, legal obstacles, and
93 case law that impact sexual predator and sexual offender
94 absconders.

95 3. Disseminate the list produced under this paragraph to
96 local law enforcement agencies.

97 (b) Develop and recommend coordinated statewide strategies
98 for the apprehension of sexual predator and sexual offender
99 absconders with special focus on those who pose the greatest
100 risk to public safety.

101 (8) REPORT.—By October 1, 2015, and annually thereafter,
102 the strike force shall submit a report on its activities and
103 recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate,
104 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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105 Section 2. For the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the sum of
106 \$101,418 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General
107 Revenue Fund to the Department of Law Enforcement for the
108 implementation of this act.

109 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.