

**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 Community Affairs

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BILL: SB 978

INTRODUCER: Senator Evers and others

SUBJECT: Crime Stoppers Trust Fund

DATE: March 31, 2014

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

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Sumner</u>	<u>Cannon</u>	<u>CJ</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Stearns</u>	<u>Yeatman</u>	<u>CA</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

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**I. Summary:**

SB 978 amends s. 16.555, F.S., to authorize a county to use funds from the Crime Stopper Trust Fund for promotional items to increase public awareness and educate the public about Crime Stoppers.

**II. Present Situation:**

The Crime Stoppers concept originated in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1976. A homicide detective with the Albuquerque Police asked a local television station to broadcast a re-enactment of an unsolved murder, offered a reward from his own pocket for any information leading to an arrest, and guaranteed the tipster's anonymity. A caller contacted the police the next day with a tip that led the police to the two men who were responsible. The success of this concept launched the Crime Stoppers. There are now over 1,200 Crime Stoppers programs worldwide.<sup>1</sup>

The Central Florida Crime Watch Program, now Central Florida Crimeline, was formed one year after the first Crime Stoppers program. Today there are 31 programs in Florida operating under the umbrella organization, Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Inc.<sup>2</sup>

Section 16.555, F.S., provides a funding mechanism for Crime Stopper programs.<sup>3</sup> The Department of Legal Affairs is required to establish a trust fund to administer grants to Crime Stoppers programs in the state, make applications for all federal and state or private grants which

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<sup>1</sup> Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, *Where It All Started*, available at, <http://www.facsflorida.org/pages/where> (last visited March 8, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, *Who We Are*, available at, <http://www.facsflorida.org/pages/who> (last visited March 8, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Section 16.555(1)(c) defines "Crime Stoppers" as the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Incorporated, a Florida Corporation.

meet the purposes of advancing Crime Stoppers programs, and deposit the received funds in the trust fund. The fund cannot exceed \$4.5 million.

County or circuit courts are required to assess an additional fine of \$20 to any fine assessed as a result of a criminal conviction.<sup>4</sup> The funds received from this additional fine (less \$3 per assessment to be retained by the clerk of the court as a service charge) are to be forwarded to the Department of Revenue for deposit in the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund.<sup>5</sup> The funds are to be designated according to the judicial circuit in which they were collected.<sup>6</sup> Any county may apply to the Department of Revenue for a grant from the funds collected from the judicial circuit in which the county is located.<sup>7</sup> However, a grant may be awarded only to counties which are served by an official member of the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers and may only be used to support Crime Stoppers and their crime fighting programs.<sup>8</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

**Section 1** amends s. 16.555, F.S., to authorize a county that is awarded funds from the Crime Stopper Trust Fund to purchase and distribute promotional items to increase public awareness and educate the public about Crime Stoppers. The bill also makes technical changes.

**Section 2** provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

#### B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

#### C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

Article III, section 19(f) of the Florida Constitution prohibits the Legislature from creating or re-creating a trust fund unless the trust fund is created or re-created by a law approved by a three-fifths vote of the membership of each house of the Legislature in a separate bill for that purpose only.

The bill allows funds from the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund to be used to purchase and distribute promotional items. It does not create or re-create a trust fund. Therefore it does not need to be approved by a three-fifths vote.

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<sup>4</sup> Section 938.06(1), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 938.06(2), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> Section 16.555(4)(b), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Section 16.555(5)(b), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

**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. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 16.555 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

## A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

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

None.

## B. Amendments:

None.