

**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 Committee on Criminal Justice

---

BILL: SB 978

INTRODUCER: Senator Evers

SUBJECT: Crime Stoppers Trust Fund

DATE: February 24, 2014

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

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

---

**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 for the purpose of increasing public awareness and educating the public about Crime Stoppers.

**II. Present Situation:**

Section 16.555, F.S., provides a funding mechanism for Crime Stopper programs.<sup>1</sup> The Department of Legal Affairs is required to make applications for all federal and state or private grants which meet the purposes of advancing Crime Stoppers in the state; establish a trust fund to administer grants to fund Crime Stoppers and its crime fighting programs within the units of local government; and administer and disburse the funds.

Proceeds of the court cost of \$20 on fines for criminal offenses collected by the clerks of the courts for county and circuit courts are deposited in a separate account in the trust fund. The clerks retain \$3 per assessment as a service charge and forward the money to the Department of Revenue for deposit in the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund.<sup>2</sup> The funds are to be designated according to the judicial circuit in where it was collected. However, grants may be awarded only to counties which are served by an official member of the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers.

Crime Stoppers began 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 on its newscast. A reward was offered and 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

---

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

<sup>2</sup> Section 938.06, F.S.

launched a program which is now internationally known as “Crime Stopper.” There are now over 1,200 Crime Stoppers programs worldwide.

The Central Florida Crime Watch Program, now Central Florida Crimeline, was formed one year after the first Crime Stoppers program. Today there are 32 programs in Florida operating under the name the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Inc.<sup>3</sup>

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

The bill 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.

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

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

None.

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

None.

#### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

The bill would allow for trust funds be used to purchase and distribute promotional items.

### **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.

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.facsflorida.org/pages/who> (last visited February 24, 2014).

**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.

---

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

---