

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FINAL BILL ANALYSIS**

**BILL #:** HB 193

**FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION:**

**SPONSOR(S):** Broxson and others

114 Y's

1 N's

**COMPANION  
BILLS:** SB 164

**GOVERNOR'S ACTION:** Approved

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**SUMMARY ANALYSIS**

HB 193 passed the House on April 9, 2015, and subsequently passed the Senate on April 24, 2015.

Crime Stoppers programs are citizen-run not-for-profit corporations that operate on the principle that "someone other than the criminal has information that can solve a crime." Crime Stoppers programs allow citizens to anonymously provide information to law enforcement about crimes. Typically, a cash reward is given if the information leads to an arrest.

In 1991, the Legislature created s. 16.555, F.S., which required the Department of Legal Affairs to establish a Crime Stoppers Trust Fund. At the time, the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund was solely funded through federal, state, and private grants awarded to the Department.

In 1998, the Legislature added a funding source by imposing a \$20 court cost on persons convicted of any criminal offense. The proceeds from the \$20 court cost are deposited in a separate account within the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund and designated according to the judicial circuit from which they were collected. Counties may apply to the Department for a grant from the funds collected by their judicial circuit. However, grants may only be awarded to counties that are served by an official member of the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Inc. and used only to support Crime Stoppers and their crime fighting programs.

The bill permits a county which is awarded funds under s. 16.555, F.S., to use the funds to purchase and distribute promotional items to increase public awareness and educate the public about Crime Stoppers.

The bill does not appear to have any impact on state or local government revenues or expenditures.

The bill was approved by the Governor on June 11, 2015, ch. 2015-136, L.O.F., and will become effective on July 1, 2015.

## I. SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION

### A. EFFECT OF CHANGES:

#### **Crime Stoppers**

Crime Stoppers programs are citizen run not-for-profit corporations that operate on the principle that “someone other than the criminal has information that can solve a crime.”<sup>1</sup> Crime Stoppers allow citizens to anonymously provide information to law enforcement about crimes.<sup>2</sup> Typically, a cash reward is given if the information leads to an arrest.<sup>3</sup>

The Crime Stoppers concept originated in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1976 when a detective asked local media to publicize the details of an unsolved murder he was investigating.<sup>4</sup> Local media publicized the reenactment as the “Crime of the Week” and provided a phone number to call if anyone had information.<sup>5</sup> The broadcast promised anonymity for anyone who called with information and a cash reward if the information led to persons involved in the crime.<sup>6</sup>

The first Crime Stoppers program in Florida was established in 1977.<sup>7</sup> The Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Inc. (hereinafter “Association”) was established in 1983 as a not-for-profit corporation<sup>8</sup> formed to facilitate the flow of information and spread the Crime Stoppers program throughout the state.

#### **Crime Stoppers Funding**

In 1991, the Legislature created s. 16.555, F.S., which required the Department of Legal Affairs (hereinafter “Department”) to establish a Crime Stoppers Trust Fund.<sup>9</sup> At the time, the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund was solely funded through federal, state, and private grants awarded to the Department.<sup>10</sup>

In 1998, the Legislature added a funding source in s. 938.06, F.S., by imposing a \$20 court cost on persons convicted of any criminal offense.<sup>11</sup> The proceeds from the \$20 court cost are deposited in a separate account within the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund and designated according to the judicial circuit from which they were collected.<sup>12</sup> Counties may apply to the Department for a grant from the funds collected by their judicial circuit.<sup>13</sup> However, grants may only be awarded to counties that are served by a Crime Stoppers program that is an official member of the Association, and the grants may only be used to support Crime Stoppers and their crime fighting programs.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> BIG BEND CRIME STOPPERS, *About Us*, <http://www.bbcisi.org/about-2> (last visited on April 22, 2015).

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

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> CRIME STOPPERS USA, *CSUSA Profile*, <http://www.crimestoppersusa.com/profile.htm> (last visited on April 22, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

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

<sup>7</sup> Willard B. Lewis, Jr., *Crimeline Lets Tipsters Bust Suspects in Secret*, ORLANDO SENTINEL (March 20, 2003), [http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2003-03-20/news/0303200165\\_1\\_crimeline-central-florida-stoppers](http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2003-03-20/news/0303200165_1_crimeline-central-florida-stoppers) (last visited on April 24, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Florida Department of State, <http://sunbiz.org> (last visited on April 24, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Ch. 91-205, Laws of Fla.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Ch. 98-319, Laws of Fla.

<sup>12</sup> s. 938.06, F.S.; s. 16.555, F.S.

<sup>13</sup> s. 16.555, F.S.

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

**Effect of the Bill**

The bill amends s. 16.555, F.S., to allow a county that is awarded a grant to use the funds to purchase and distribute promotional items. The bill specifies that the promotional items must be for the purpose of increasing public awareness of, and educating the public about, Crime Stoppers.

**II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT****A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:****1. Revenues:**

The bill does not appear to have any impact on state revenues.

**2. Expenditures:**

The bill does not appear to have any impact on state expenditures.

**B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:****1. Revenues:**

The bill does not appear to have any impact on local government revenues.

**2. Expenditures:**

The bill does not appear to have any impact on local government expenditures.

**C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:**

None.

**D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

None.