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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to missing persons with special needs;
3 creating s. 937.041, F.S.; creating pilot projects in
4 specified counties to provide personal devices to aid
5 search-and-rescue efforts for persons with special
6 needs; providing for administration of the projects;
7 requiring reports; providing for expiration; providing
8 appropriations; providing an effective date.

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

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12 Section 1. Section 937.041, Florida Statutes, is created to
13 read:

14 937.041 Missing persons with special needs pilot projects.-

15 (1) (a) There is created a pilot project in Alachua, Baker,
16 Columbia, Hamilton, and Suwannee Counties, to be known as
17 "Project Leo," to provide personal devices to aid search-and-
18 rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the case of
19 elopement.

20 (b) There is created an additional pilot project in Palm
21 Beach County to provide personal devices to aid search-and-
22 rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the case of
23 elopement.

24 (c) There is created an additional pilot project in
25 Hillsborough County to provide personal devices to aid search-
26 and-rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the case of
27 elopement.

28 (2) (a) 1. Participants for the pilot project specified in
29 paragraph (1) (a) shall be selected based on criteria developed

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30 by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the
31 University of Florida.

32 2. Participants for the pilot project specified in
33 paragraph (1)(b) shall be selected based on criteria developed
34 by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida
35 Atlantic University.

36 3. Participants for the pilot project specified in
37 paragraph (1)(c) shall be selected based on criteria developed
38 by the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the
39 University of South Florida.

40 (b) Criteria for participation in the pilot projects must
41 include, at a minimum, the person's risk of elopement. The
42 qualifying participants shall be selected on a first-come,
43 first-served basis by the respective centers to the extent of
44 available funding within their existing resources. Each project
45 must be voluntary and free of charge to participants.

46 (3) Under each pilot project, personal devices to aid
47 search-and-rescue efforts which are attachable to clothing or
48 otherwise worn shall be provided by the respective center to the
49 sheriff's offices of the participating counties. The devices
50 shall be distributed to project participants by the county
51 sheriff's offices in conjunction with the respective center. The
52 respective center shall fund any costs associated with
53 monitoring the devices.

54 (4) Each center shall submit a preliminary report by
55 December 1, 2016, and a final report by December 15, 2017, to
56 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
57 the House of Representatives describing the implementation and
58 operation of its pilot project. At a minimum, each report must

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59 include the criteria used to select participants, the number of
60 participants, the nature of the participants' special needs, the
61 number of participants who elope, the amount of time taken to
62 rescue such participants following elopement, and the outcome of
63 any rescue attempts. Each final report shall also provide
64 recommendations for modification or continued implementation of
65 the project.

66 (5) Each project shall operate to the extent of available
67 funding within the respective center's existing resources.

68 (6) This section expires June 30, 2018.

69 Section 2. For the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the sum of
70 \$100,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General
71 Revenue Fund to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities
72 at the University of Florida, the sum of \$100,000 in
73 nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund
74 to the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at Florida
75 Atlantic University, and the sum of \$100,000 in nonrecurring
76 funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the
77 Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of
78 South Florida. The funds provided to each center shall be used
79 for the purchase of personal devices to aid search-and-rescue
80 efforts for persons with special needs in the case of elopement.

81 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.