

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to missing persons with special needs;
 3 amending s. 937.041, F.S.; expanding a project for
 4 missing persons with special needs to all centers for
 5 autism and related disabilities at state universities;
 6 providing an effective date.

7
 8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 10 Section 1. Section 937.041, Florida Statutes, is amended
 11 to read:

12 937.041 Missing persons with special needs pilot
 13 projects.—

14 (1) ~~(a)~~ There is created a statewide ~~pilot~~ project ~~in~~
 15 ~~Alachua, Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, and Suwannee Counties,~~ to be
 16 known as "Project Leo," to provide personal devices to aid
 17 search-and-rescue efforts for persons with special needs in the
 18 case of elopement through a center for autism and related
 19 disabilities at any state university listed in s. 1000.21(6).

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

47 (3) Under the ~~each pilot~~ project, personal devices to aid
48 search-and-rescue efforts which are attachable to clothing or
49 otherwise worn shall be provided by the respective center to the
50 sheriff's offices of the participating counties. The devices

51 shall be distributed to project participants by the county
52 sheriff's offices in conjunction with the respective center. The
53 respective center shall fund any costs associated with
54 monitoring the devices.

55 ~~(4) Each center shall submit a preliminary report by~~
56 ~~December 1, 2016, and a final report by December 15, 2017, to~~
57 ~~the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of~~
58 ~~the House of Representatives describing the implementation and~~
59 ~~operation of its pilot project. At a minimum, each report must~~
60 ~~include the criteria used to select participants, the number of~~
61 ~~participants, the nature of the participants' special needs, the~~
62 ~~number of participants who elope, the amount of time taken to~~
63 ~~rescue such participants following elopement, and the outcome of~~
64 ~~any rescue attempts. Each final report shall also provide~~
65 ~~recommendations for modification or continued implementation of~~
66 ~~the project.~~

67 (4)~~(5)~~ The ~~Each~~ project shall operate to the extent of
68 available funding within the respective center's existing
69 resources.

70 (5)~~(6)~~ This section expires June 30, 2019 ~~2018~~.

71 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.