

**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 Rules

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BILL: SB 1424

INTRODUCER: Senator Gruters

SUBJECT: Special Neighborhood Improvement Districts

DATE: February 28, 2020

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

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Toman</u>	<u>Yeatman</u>	<u>CA</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Kraemer</u>	<u>Imhof</u>	<u>IT</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
3.	<u>Toman</u>	<u>Phelps</u>	<u>RC</u>	<b>Pre-meeting</b>

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1424 revises provisions relating to the board of directors of a special neighborhood improvement district, including authorizing the appointment of a three-, five-, or seven-member board and requiring the board members to be landowners in the district. The bill requires counties or municipalities to specify the number of directors in the ordinance creating the special neighborhood improvement district.

The bill has no impact on state government.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Safe Neighborhood Improvement Districts**

***Purposes and Creation***

Part IV of ch. 163, F.S., is known as the "Safe Neighborhoods Act." The intent of the act is to:

- Guide and accomplish the coordinated, balanced, and harmonious development of safe neighborhoods;
- Promote the health, safety, and general welfare of these areas and their inhabitants, visitors, property owners, and workers;
- Establish, maintain, and preserve property values and preserve and foster the development of attractive neighborhoods and business environments;
- Prevent overcrowding and congestion;
- Improve or redirect traffic and provide pedestrian safety;
- Reduce crime rates and the opportunities for the commission of crime; and

- Provide improvements in neighborhoods so they are defensible against crime.<sup>1</sup>

Section 163.503(1), F.S., defines the term “safe neighborhood improvement district” (SNID) or “neighborhood improvement district” to mean:

[a] district located in an area in which more than 75 percent of the land is used for residential purposes, or in an area in which more than 75 percent of the land is used for commercial, office, business, or industrial purposes, excluding the land area used for public facilities, and where there is a plan to reduce crime through the implementation of crime prevention through environmental design, environmental security, or defensible space techniques, or through community policing innovations.

The act allows county or municipal governing bodies to create SNIDs through the adoption of a planning ordinance. Each SNID that is established is required to register within 30 days with both the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and the Department of Legal Affairs (DLA) and provide the name, location, size, type of SNID, and such other information that the departments may require.<sup>2</sup> Under current law, there are four types of SNIDs:

- Local government SNIDs;
- Property owners’ association SNIDs;
- Community redevelopment SNIDs; and
- Special SNIDs, which are further classified as either residential or business.<sup>3</sup>

As of January 25, 2020, there are 27 active SNIDs in the state of Florida.<sup>4</sup> Twenty-four of these are local government SNIDs; two are special residential SNIDs; and one is classified as a property owners’ association SNID.

### ***SNID Boards and Revenue Sources***

The board of directors of a local government SNID is the local governing body of the municipality or county that created the SNID; however, as an alternative, a majority of the local governing body may also appoint a different board.<sup>5</sup> The board of a property owners’ association SNID is comprised of the officers of the property owners’ association.<sup>6</sup>

The board of a special SNID is a three-member body, appointed by the governing body of the municipality or county that created the SNID, who are residents of the area, are subject to ad valorem taxation in the district, and serve staggered terms of three years.<sup>7</sup> The board of a community redevelopment SNID is the community redevelopment board of commissioners,

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<sup>1</sup> See s. 163.502(3), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 163.5055(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> See ss. 163.506, 163.508, 163.511, and 163.512, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Division of Community Development, *Official List of Special Districts Online*, available at <http://specialdistrictreports.floridajobs.org/webreports/mainindex.aspx> (last visited Feb. 11, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Sections 163.506(1)(e) and (3), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> Section 163.508(1)(e), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Sections 163.511(1)(f), and (8), F.S.

which is designated by the governing body of the municipality or county that created the community redevelopment agency.<sup>8</sup>

Local government SNIDs and special SNIDs are authorized to levy ad valorem taxes up to two mills annually.<sup>9</sup> Local government SNIDs are authorized to levy tax without a referendum; however, special SNIDs require a referendum to levy ad valorem taxes.<sup>10</sup> For a special *residential* SNID, taxes are approved by a majority of the electors voting in the referendum.<sup>11</sup> For a special *business* SNID, taxes are approved by freeholders representing in excess of 50 percent of the assessed value of the property within the SNID.<sup>12</sup>

All SNIDs are also authorized to make and collect special assessments, but all special assessments are subject to referendum approval.<sup>13</sup> Special assessments are approved by a majority of registered voters residing in the SNID.<sup>14</sup> Assessments may be collected pursuant to ss. 197.3632 and 197.3635, F.S., which address the uniform method for collection of non-ad valorem assessments. Assessments may not exceed \$500 for each individual parcel of land per year.

Community redevelopment SNIDs may also utilize community redevelopment trust funds to implement district planning and programming that is consistent with the community redevelopment plan created pursuant to s. 163.360, F.S.<sup>15</sup>

### ***SNID Dissolutions***

Local government and community redevelopment SNIDs may be dissolved by the governing body that established them.<sup>16</sup> Property owners' association SNIDs continue in perpetuity as long as the property owners' association exists.<sup>17</sup> Special SNIDs are dissolved at the end of the tenth fiscal year of operation.<sup>18</sup>

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

**Section 1** amends s. 163.511, F.S., to revise several provisions relating to the board of directors of a special SNID. The bill provides for the appointment of a three-, five-, or seven-member board rather than the 3-member board currently required by law. The number of appointed

<sup>8</sup> Section 163.512(1)(d), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Sections 163.506(1)(c), F.S., and 163.511(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Section 163.511(1)(a) and (b), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 163.511(3)(g), F.S. Although the term "elector" is used in s. 163.511(3)(g), F.S., it is not defined in the act; it appears the intent is that the vote be made by district residents who are registered voters. *See* s. 163.511(3)(b), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Section 163.511(4)(g), F.S. Similarly, although the term "freeholder" is used in s. 163.511(4)(g), F.S., it is not defined in the act; it appears the intent is that the vote be made by property owners on the tax assessment roll whose property in the district.

<sup>13</sup> Section 163.514(16), F.S. This authority and any of the other SNID powers enumerated in s. 163.514, F.S., may be prohibited by the SNID's enacting ordinance.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* *See also supra* notes 11 and 12 regarding the terms "elector" and "freeholder."

<sup>15</sup> Section 163.512(1)(c), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Sections 163.506(4) and 163.512(3), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 163.508(4), F.S.

<sup>18</sup> Section 163.511(13), F.S. Special SNIDs may continue for subsequent 10-year periods if the continuation of the district is approved through referendum.

directors must be specified in the local planning ordinance, and the members must be elected to staggered terms of four years. Additionally, the board of directors must be landowners in the district, whereas current law only requires the board of directors to be residents of the area.

**Section 2** provides the bill takes effect July 1, 2020.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

**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 s. 163.511 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.

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

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