

**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 Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

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BILL: CS/SB 1578

INTRODUCER: Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee and Senator Thompson

SUBJECT: Florida Children’s Initiatives

DATE: April 5, 2023

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

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Tuszynski	Cox	CF	Fav/CS
2.	_____	_____	CA	_____
3.	_____	_____	RC	_____

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 1578 makes numerous changes to s. 409.147, F.S., to restructure, streamline, and clarify the requirements and objectives of children’s initiatives. Specifically, the bill:

- Renames s. 409.147, F.S. from “Children’s Initiatives” to “Florida Children’s Initiatives”.
- Renames the Parramore Kidz Zone to the “Orlando Kidz Zones” and expands the reach of the initiative to encompass the Orlando neighborhoods of Parramore, Mercy Drive, and Englewood.
- Renames the Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise Success Zone (SSNOP) to the “Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise”.
- Removes the specification that existing children’s initiatives are 10-year projects, and makes changes throughout to extend current requirements and exemptions enumerated for children’s initiatives to all Florida Children’s Initiatives, including requirements for public records and meetings and procurement of commodities or contractual services.
- Expands the ways in which a county or municipality shall recognize a not-for-profit corporation that will serve as a children’s initiative to allow a county to identify an existing, qualified not-for-profit corporation, as a children’s initiative instead of creating one.
- Grants counties that do not currently have a children's initiative and are trying to establish an initiative priority for designation as a children’s initiative.
- Expands the youth support objectives of the children’s initiative working group to include increasing “postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion rates among neighborhood youth” not just “increasing high school graduation.” and the safety objectives

of the working group to “reduce youth incarceration” in addition to the currently required “reduce youth violence, crime, and recidivism.”

- Makes technical and conforming changes throughout to implement the substantive changes of the bill.

The bill is not expected to have a fiscal impact on state government. See Section V. Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2023.

## II. Present Situation:

### Florida Children’s Initiatives

In 2008, the Legislature created Children’s Initiatives.<sup>1</sup> Florida children’s initiatives assist disadvantaged areas within the state in creating a community-based service network that develops, coordinates, and provides quality education, accessible health care, youth development programs, opportunities for employment, and safe and affordable housing for children and families living within that area.<sup>2</sup>

Section 409.147, F.S., outlines the process for a county or municipality (or designated area) to apply to the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, Inc. to designate an area as a children’s initiative. The governing body of the county or municipality must first adopt a resolution finding the area has issues related to poverty, that changes are necessary for the area to improve, and that resources are necessary for revitalization of the area.<sup>3</sup> The county or municipality must then establish a children’s initiative planning team and develop and adopt a strategic community plan.<sup>4</sup> Once a county or municipality has completed these steps, it must create a not-for-profit corporation to facilitate fundraising and secure broad community ownership of the children’s initiative.<sup>5</sup>

Currently, there are five recognized children’s initiatives in Florida:<sup>6</sup>

- Miami Children’s Initiative.<sup>7</sup>
- New Town Success Zone in Jacksonville.<sup>8</sup>
- Parramore Kidz Zone in Orlando.<sup>9</sup>
- Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise in Tampa.<sup>10</sup>
- Overtown Children and Youth Coalition in Miami.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 2008-96 s. 1, L.O.F.; codified as s. 409.147, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 409.147(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Section 409.147(4)(a), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Section 409.147(5), 409.147(6), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 409.147(7), F.S.

<sup>6</sup> The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, *Children’s Initiative Communities in Florida*, available at [https://www.ounce.org/fci\\_communities.html](https://www.ounce.org/fci_communities.html) (last visited March 30, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> See s. 409.147(9), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> See s. 409.147(10), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> See s. 409.147(11), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> See s. 409.147(12), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> See s. 409.147(13), F.S.

Section 409.147, F.S., sets requirements for children’s initiatives to receive funding. Unless otherwise specified in the general appropriations act, children’s initiatives must be awarded state funding through performance-based contracts that link payments to achievement of outcomes directly related to the goals, objectives, strategies, and tasks outlined in the strategic community plan. Counties that do not currently have an initiative and are trying to establish one have priority for funding.<sup>12</sup>

Children’s initiatives must update strategic community plans every five years to reflect, at a minimum, the current status of the area served by the children’s initiative, the goals, objectives, and strategies for each focus area, and the tasks required to implement the strategies the following year.<sup>13</sup> Existing children’s initiatives are designated in statute as 10-year projects, but some initiatives have been around longer than 10 years, such as the New Town Success Zone.<sup>14</sup> To facilitate achievement of the strategic community plans, the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida (the Ounce)<sup>15</sup> must provide technical assistance to the children’s initiative corporations.<sup>16</sup>

### ***The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida***

The Ounce is a private, nonprofit corporation dedicated to shaping prevention policy and investing in innovative prevention programs that provide measurable benefits to Florida’s children, families, and communities.<sup>17</sup> The Ounce identifies, funds, supports, and tests programs to improve the life outcomes of children, preserve and strengthen families, and promote healthy behavior and functioning in society.<sup>18</sup> Current law identifies the Ounce as the only organization able to designate areas in Florida as children’s initiatives.<sup>19</sup> The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was appropriated \$4.2 million dollars in 2022 to fund new or existing Children’s Initiatives<sup>20</sup> and the Ounce was contracted to manage that \$4.2 million dollar appropriation.<sup>21</sup>

### ***Exemptions and Requirements for Children’s Initiatives***

Florida law states that each children’s initiative shall be managed by an entity that is registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance with ch. 617, F.S., relating to corporations not for profit. Children’s initiatives are designed to encompass an area large enough to include all of the necessary components of community life, including, but not limited to, schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, commercial areas, and common space, yet small enough to allow programs and services to reach every member of the neighborhood who is willing to participate in the project.

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<sup>12</sup> Section 409.147(8)(b), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Section 409.147(7)(a)3., F.S.

<sup>14</sup> See generally New Town Success Zone, *Five Year Report to the Community*, Spring 2012, available at <https://www.coj.net/departments/childrens-commission/docs/new-town-success-zone/ntsz-5yr-report.aspx> (last viewed March 30, 2023).

<sup>15</sup> Section 409.147(3)(b), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Section 409.147(7)(b), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, available at <https://www.ounce.org/> (last viewed March 30, 2023).

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> Section 409.147(4), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> Chapter 2022-156, L.O.F., specific appropriation 318.

<sup>21</sup> Department of Financial Services, Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System, Grant Disbursement Information, available at <https://facts.flds.com/Search/ContractDetail.aspx?AgencyId=600000&ContractId=LJ210>, (last viewed March 23, 2023).

Non-profit corporations created and designated as children’s initiatives are not subject to the control, supervision, or direction by any department of the state in any manner. However, the corporations are subject to ch. 119, F.S., relating to public records; ch. 286, F.S., relating to public meetings and records; and ch. 287, F.S., relating to procurement of commodities or contractual services. Corporations must comply with these requirements to “operate in the most open and accessible manner,” consistent with their public purpose.<sup>22</sup>

### *New Children’s Initiatives*

Mercy Drive and Englewood Kidz Zones aim to reduce juvenile crime, teen pregnancies, child abuse and neglect and high school drop-out rates among Orlando’s most vulnerable youth.<sup>23</sup> The initiatives are modeled after successful initiatives such as the Harlem Children’s Zone and the Parramore Kidz Zone. From its inception in 2009 to 2019, the Parramore Zone recorded that:<sup>24</sup>

- It had served more than 6,000 children.
- Juvenile arrests in were down 78.3 percent.
- Teen births were down 63.4 percent.
- Infants, toddlers and preschoolers attending early learning programs were up 117 percent.
- Verified cases of child abuse and neglect were down 62.4 percent.

The geographic area of the new initiatives was carefully selected based on need and consideration of areas where infrastructure and programming were already being built out.<sup>25</sup>

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

The bill makes numerous changes to s. 409.147, F.S., to streamline and clarify the requirements and objectives of children’s initiatives. The bill renames s. 409.147, F.S., from “Children’s Initiatives” to “Florida Children’s Initiatives” to better conform with the substantive changes of the bill.

The bill further amends s. 409.147, F.S., to rename the Parramore Kidz Zone to the “Orlando Kidz Zones” and expands the reach of the initiative to encompass the Orlando neighborhoods of Parramore, Mercy Drive, and Englewood. The bill states that all three of these neighborhoods are large enough to include all of the necessary components of community life. This adds two new areas in Orlando to statute.

The bill also changes the name of the Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise Success Zone (SSNOP) to the “Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise”.

The bill amends s. 409.147, F.S., to remove the specification that existing children’s initiatives are 10-year projects, and makes changes throughout to extend current requirements and exemptions enumerated for children’s initiatives to all Florida Children’s Initiatives, including

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<sup>22</sup> See Section 409.147, F.S.

<sup>23</sup> City of Orlando, Orlando Kidz Zones, available at <https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Departments-Offices/FPR/Orlando-Kidz-Zones>, (last viewed March 30, 2023).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> Fox 35, Orlando, *Orlando expanding Kidz Zone model to 3 neighborhoods to help at-risk youth*, available at <https://www.fox35orlando.com/news/orlando-expanding-kidz-zone-model-to-3-neighborhoods-to-help-at-risk-youth>, June 15, 2021 (last viewed March 30, 2023).

requirements for public records and meetings and procurement of commodities or contractual services.

The bill expands the ways in which a county or municipality must recognize a not-for-profit corporation that will serve as a children's initiative. Current law requires a county or municipality to create a not-for-profit corporation as a children's initiative; however, the bill language allows a county to identify an existing, qualified not-for-profit corporation.

The bill states that counties that do not currently have a children's initiative and are trying to establish an initiative have priority for "designation by the Ounce."

The bill also expands the objectives of the working groups involved in the formation of the children's initiative strategic community plan. The bill expands the youth support objectives<sup>26</sup> of a working group to include increasing "postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion rates among neighborhood youth" not just "increasing high school graduation." The bill also expands the community safety objectives<sup>27</sup> of the working group to "reduce youth incarceration" in addition to the currently required "reduce youth violence, crime, and recidivism."

The bill makes technical and conforming changes throughout to implement the substantive changes of the bill.

The bill is effective July 1, 2023.

#### **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 identified.

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<sup>26</sup> Section 409.147(6)(d), F.S.

<sup>27</sup> Section 409.147(6)(g), F.S.

**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 section 409.147 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

## A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Children, Families, and Elder Affairs Committee on April 4, 2023:**

The Committee Substitute adds “higher rates of childhood obesity” to the list of adverse health outcomes experienced by children within the geographical areas that qualify for a Children’s Initiative.

## B. Amendments:

None.