

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/CS/HB 625 Children's Initiative Projects

SPONSOR(S): Health & Human Services Committee, Children, Families & Seniors Subcommittee, Bracy Davis and others

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Children, Families & Seniors Subcommittee	16 Y, 0 N, As CS	Speas	Brazzell
2) Health & Human Services Committee	16 Y, 0 N, As CS	Speas	Calamas

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Legislature created children's initiatives in 2008 to 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. Children's initiatives are designed to encompass an area large enough to include all of the necessary components of community life, yet small enough to allow programs and services to reach every member of the neighborhood who is willing to participate in the project.

Florida law assigns the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, Inc., (the Ounce) the responsibility of reviewing and approving requests from counties, or municipalities, or designated areas to obtain a children's initiative designation. Section 409.147, F.S., outlines the process to apply to the Ounce to designate an area as a children's initiative. Each children's initiative is managed by an entity that is registered, incorporated, organized, and operated as a corporation not for profit.

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. The Ounce oversees these contracts and has a \$4.2 million contract with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to fund new and existing initiatives. Current law provides that counties without a children's initiative that are trying to establish an initiative have priority for funding.

The bill changes the name of the Parramore Kidz Zone to the "Orlando Kidz Zones" and expands the reach of the initiative by stating that the initiative is designed to encompass the Orlando neighborhoods of Parramore, Mercy Drive, and Englewood. The bill applies current statutory requirements and exemptions for children's initiatives to the Orlando Kidz Zones. The bill also:

- Maintains the requirement that initiatives be managed by entities that are corporations not for profit.
- Expands the ways in which a county or municipality shall recognize a not-for-profit corporation to serve as a children's initiative.
- Requires that counties that do not have a children's initiative that are trying to establish an initiative have "priority for designation by the Ounce."
- Expands objectives of working groups forming a children's initiative strategic community plan.

The bill has no fiscal impact on state or local governments.

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

FULL ANALYSIS

This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives .

STORAGE NAME: h0625c.HHS

DATE: 4/11/2023

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Background

Florida Children's Initiatives

In 2008, the Legislature created s. 409.147, F.S., which established children's initiatives. 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.¹

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.² The county or municipality (or designated area) must then establish a children's initiative planning team and develop and adopt a strategic community plan.³ 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.⁴

There are five children's initiatives in Florida:⁵

- New Town Success Zone in Jacksonville.
- Miami Children's Initiative.
- Parramore Kidz Zone in Orlando.
- Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise in Tampa.
- Overtown Children and Youth Coalition in Miami.

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.⁶ Counties that do not currently have an initiative and are trying to establish one have priority for funding.⁷

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. Children's initiatives are currently designated in statute as 10-year projects, but some initiatives have been around longer than 10 years, such as the New Town Success Zone.⁸ To facilitate achievement of the strategic community plans, the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida (the Ounce) must provide technical assistance to the children's initiative corporations.⁹

¹ S. 409.147(1)(b), F.S.

² S. 409.147(4)(a), F.S.

³ S. 409.147(5), 409.147(6), F.S.

⁴ S. 409.147(7), F.S.

⁵ The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, *Children's Initiative Communities in Florida*, https://www.ounce.org/fci_communities.html, (last visited March 23, 2023).

⁶ S. 409.147(8), F.S.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ New Town Success Zone, *Five Year Report to the Community*, Spring 2012, [nts-5yr-report.aspx\(coj.net\)](https://www.nts-5yr-report.aspx(coj.net)) (last visited March 23, 2023).

⁹ S. 409.147(3)(b), F.S.

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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ Current law identifies the Ounce as the only organization able to designate areas in Florida as children's initiatives.¹² The Ounce has a \$4.2 million contract with DCF to fund new and existing initiatives.¹³

Exemptions and Requirements for Children's Initiatives

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.¹⁴ Florida law states that each children's initiative shall be managed by an entity that is registered, incorporated, organized, and operated in compliance with Chapter 617, F.S., relating to corporations not for profit.¹⁵

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 Chapter 119, relating to public records, Chapter 286, relating to public meetings and records, and Chapter 287, 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.¹⁶

New Children's Initiative

The Legislature has recognized that children living in neighborhoods where children's initiatives are needed often suffer from high rates of asthma, a higher risk of lead poisoning, and inadequate health care.¹⁷ Children living in these neighborhoods are also routinely exposed to violence and crime.¹⁸ The Orlando Kidz Zones children's initiative aims to reduce juvenile crime, teen pregnancies, child abuse and neglect and high school drop-out rates among Orlando's most vulnerable youth.¹⁹ The expanded initiative is 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:²⁰

- It had served more than 6,000 children.
- Juvenile arrests 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.

¹⁰ The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, <https://www.ounce.org/> (last visited Jan. 28, 2022).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² S. 409.147(4), F.S.

¹³ Department of Financial Services, Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System, Grant Disbursement Information, <https://facts.flds.com/Search/ContractDetail.aspx?AgencyId=600000&ContractId=LJ210>, (last visited March 23, 2023).

¹⁴ S. 409.147, F.S.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ City of Orlando, Orlando Kidz Zones, <https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Departments-Offices/FPR/Orlando-Kidz-Zones>, (last visited March 24, 2023).

²⁰ *Id.*

The geographic area of the Orlando Kidz Zones was carefully selected based on need and consideration of areas where infrastructure and programming were already being built out.²¹

Effect of the Bill

The bill changes the name of the Parramore Kidz Zone to the “Orlando Kidz Zones” and expands the reach of the initiative by stating that the initiative is designed 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. 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 renames children’s initiatives the “Florida children’s initiatives” and removes the specification that children’s initiatives are 10-year projects. The bill applies current requirements and exemptions for children’s initiatives to the Orlando Kidz Zones, including public records and meetings requirements and Chapter 287 requirements related to procurement of commodities or contractual services.

The bill expands the ways in which a county or municipality shall recognize a not-for-profit corporation that will serve as a children’s initiative. The county shall either identify an existing, qualified not-for-profit corporation, or create a not-for-profit corporation which shall be registered.

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 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 of a working group to include increasing “the high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment, and postsecondary completion rates among neighborhood youth.”

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

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 409.147, F.S., relating to children’s initiatives.

Section 2: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2023.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

²¹ Fox 35, Orlando, *Orlando expanding Kidz Zone model to 3 neighborhoods to help at-risk youth*, <https://www.fox35orlando.com/news/orlando-expanding-kidz-zone-model-to-3-neighborhoods-to-help-at-risk-youth>, June 15, 2021 (last visited March 24, 2023).

2. Expenditures:
None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:
None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:
None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not Applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:
None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not confer rulemaking authority nor require the promulgation of rules.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:
None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On March 27, 2023, the Children, Families & Seniors Subcommittee adopted one strike-all amendment and reported the bill favorably as a committee substitute. The amendment:

- Expands and renames the Parramore Kidz Zone to the Orlando Kidz Zones, encompassing the neighborhoods of Parramore, Mercy Drive, and Englewood.
- Expands the ways in which a county or municipality shall recognize a not-for-profit corporation that will serve as a children's initiative.
- Changes the requirement that counties without a children's initiative that try to establish an initiative have "priority for funding" by stating that these counties have "priority for designation by the Ounce."
- Removes the specification that children's initiatives are 10-year projects.
- Expands the "youth support" objectives of working groups involved in the formation of the children's initiative strategic community plan.
- Changes the name of the Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise Success Zone (SSNOP) to the "Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise."

On April 10, 2023, the Health & Human Services Committee adopted one amendment and reported the bill favorably as a committee substitute. The amendment:

- Conforms the bill to its Senate companion by including in statute the Legislature's recognition that children living in neighborhoods where children's initiatives are needed often suffer from higher rates of childhood obesity.

This analysis is drafted to the committee substitute as passed by the Health & Human Services Committee.