

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to Pinellas Suncoast Transit  
 3           Authority, Pinellas County; amending chapter 2000-424,  
 4           Laws of Florida, as amended; revising the definition  
 5           of the term "public transit"; revising membership of  
 6           the governing body of the authority; revising powers  
 7           of the authority; establishing requirements for  
 8           advertising placed on authority property; providing  
 9           for best budget practices; establishing procedures for  
 10          lane elimination; prohibiting certain offices, boards,  
 11          employees, or other actors whose purpose is to  
 12          eliminate or reallocate public lanes; requiring  
 13          semiannual reporting of certain provisions to the  
 14          Pinellas Board of County Commissioners; specifying  
 15          severability; providing an effective date.

16  
 17   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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19           Section 1. Subsection (6) of section 2, paragraph (a) of  
 20           subsection (2) of section 3, and section 4 of section 2 of  
 21           chapter 2000-424, Laws of Florida, as amended by chapters 2002-  
 22           341 and 2006-327, Laws of Florida, are amended, and sections 14  
 23           through 18 are added to section 2 of that chapter, to read:

24           Section 2. Definitions.—As used in this act, unless the  
 25           content clearly indicates otherwise, the following terms shall

26 | have the meanings set forth below:

27 |         (6) "Public transit" means transportation of passengers  
 28 | for hire by means, without limitation, of a ~~street railway,~~  
 29 | ~~elevated railway, subway,~~ motor vehicle, bus, or other means of  
 30 | conveyance operating as a common carrier within the public  
 31 | transit area as provided, and charter service originating  
 32 | therein.

33 |         Section 3. Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority; status and  
 34 | governing body.—

35 |         (2) (a) The governing body of the authority shall consist  
 36 | of 11 ~~15~~ members, serving and selected as provided in this  
 37 | paragraph.

38 |         1. Four members shall be appointed by the Pinellas County  
 39 | Board of County Commissioners from their membership. This  
 40 | appointee shall be an elected official.

41 |         2. One member shall be appointed by the City Council of  
 42 | the City of St. Petersburg from their membership. This appointee  
 43 | shall be an elected official.

44 |         3. One member shall be appointed by the City Council of  
 45 | the City of Clearwater from their membership. This appointee  
 46 | shall be an elected official.

47 |         4. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal  
 48 | governing bodies of Tarpon Springs, Safety Harbor, Oldsmar,  
 49 | Dunedin, Belleair, Belleair Beach, and Belleair Bluffs. This  
 50 | appointee shall be an elected official. The order of rotation

51 shall be determined by population size in descending order.

52 5. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal  
53 governing bodies of Largo, Seminole, South Pasadena, Gulfport,  
54 Kenneth City, and Pinellas Park. This appointee shall be an  
55 elected official. The order of rotation shall be determined by  
56 population size in descending order.

57 6. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal  
58 governing bodies of Belleair Shore, Indian Rocks Beach, Indian  
59 Shores, North Redington Beach, Redington Beach, Redington  
60 Shores, Madeira Beach, Treasure Island, and St. Pete Beach. This  
61 appointee shall be an elected official. The order of rotation  
62 shall be determined by population size in descending order.

63 7. One member shall be appointed by the Senate President  
64 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives from the  
65 combined municipal governing bodies of Tarpon Springs, Safety  
66 Harbor, Oldsmar, Dunedin, Belleair, Belleair Beach, and Belleair  
67 Bluffs. This appointee shall be a citizen appointee. This  
68 appointment shall rotate between municipalities.

69 8. One member shall be appointed by the Senate President  
70 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives from the  
71 combined municipal governing bodies of Largo, Seminole, South  
72 Pasadena, Gulfport, Kenneth City, and Pinellas Park. This  
73 appointee shall be a citizen appointee. This appointment shall  
74 rotate between municipalities.

75 ~~1. One member shall be appointed by the City Council of~~

76 | ~~the City of Clearwater from its membership.~~

77 |       ~~2. One member shall be appointed by the City Commission of~~  
 78 | ~~the City of Dunedin from its membership.~~

79 |       ~~3. One member shall be appointed by the City Commission of~~  
 80 | ~~the City of Largo from its membership.~~

81 |       ~~4. One member shall be appointed by the City Council of~~  
 82 | ~~the City of Pinellas Park from its membership.~~

83 |       ~~5. Two members shall be appointed by the City Council of~~  
 84 | ~~the City of St. Petersburg from its membership.~~

85 |       ~~6. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal~~  
 86 | ~~governing bodies of the Cities of Oldsmar, Safety Harbor, and~~  
 87 | ~~Tarpon Springs from their membership.~~

88 |       ~~7. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal~~  
 89 | ~~governing bodies of the Cities of Belleair, Belleair Bluffs,~~  
 90 | ~~Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole, and South Pasadena from their~~  
 91 | ~~membership.~~

92 |       ~~8. One member shall be appointed by the combined municipal~~  
 93 | ~~governing bodies of the Cities of Belleair Beach, Belleair~~  
 94 | ~~Shores, Indian Rocks Beach, Indian Shores, Madeira Beach, North~~  
 95 | ~~Redington Beach, Redington Beach, Redington Shores, St. Pete~~  
 96 | ~~Beach, and Treasure Island from their membership.~~

97 |       ~~9. Four members shall be appointed by the Pinellas County~~  
 98 | ~~Commission from its membership.~~

99 |       ~~10. One member shall be appointed by the Pinellas County~~  
 100 | ~~Commission, and this member may not be an elected official.~~

101 ~~11. One member shall be appointed by the City Council of~~  
 102 ~~the City of St. Petersburg, and this member may not be an~~  
 103 ~~elected official.~~

104 Section 4. Purposes and powers.—

105 (1) The authority created and established by the  
 106 provisions of this act is hereby granted and shall have the  
 107 right and power to purchase, own, and/or operate transit  
 108 facilities;; to contract for transit services;; to exercise  
 109 power of eminent domain if approved by a two-thirds vote of the  
 110 Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority Board in a public meeting  
 111 with a 30-day public notice and shall be reported to the  
 112 Pinellas Board of County Commissioners semiannually in public  
 113 meetings with a 30-day public notice; to conduct studies;; and  
 114 to contract with other governmental agencies, private companies,  
 115 and individuals.

116 (2) The authority is hereby granted, and shall have and  
 117 may exercise all powers necessary, appurtenant, convenient, or  
 118 incidental to the carrying out of the aforesaid purposes,  
 119 including, but not limited to, the following rights and powers:

120 (a) To sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, and  
 121 complain and defend in all courts.

122 (b) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.

123 (c) To acquire, purchase, hold, lease as a lessee, and use  
 124 any franchise, property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or  
 125 intangible, or any interest therein, necessary or desirable for

126 carrying out the purposes of the authority, and to sell, lease  
127 as lessor, transfer, and dispose of any property or interest  
128 therein at any time acquired by it. Any sale, lease, or transfer  
129 of any property or interest shall be upon competitive bid except  
130 that the authority may sell, lease, or transfer any real  
131 property or interest therein to another governmental entity  
132 without competitive bid and may sell, lease, or transfer surplus  
133 personal property, tangible or intangible, in accordance with  
134 chapter 274, Florida Statutes.

135 (d) To fix, alter, charge, and establish rates, fares, and  
136 other charges for the services and facilities of the Pinellas  
137 Suncoast Transit System, which rates, fees, and charges shall be  
138 equitable and just and sufficient to meet the operating  
139 requirements of the system along with other revenue that may be  
140 available.

141 ~~(e) To regulate other operators of public transit in the~~  
142 ~~Pinellas Suncoast Transit Area as to franchises, permits, fares,~~  
143 ~~and other charges to establish rules and regulations pertaining~~  
144 ~~to these matters for distribution to the operators and public~~  
145 ~~transit facilities in said area.~~

146 (e)~~(f)~~ To make contracts of every name and nature and to  
147 execute all instruments necessary or convenient for the carrying  
148 on of its business.

149 (f)~~(g)~~ To enter into management contracts with any person  
150 or persons for the management of a transit system owned or

151 controlled by the authority for such period or periods of time,  
 152 and under such compensation and other terms and conditions as  
 153 shall be deemed advisable by the authority.

154 (g)~~(h)~~ Without limitation, to borrow money and accept  
 155 gifts or grants or loans of money or other property and to enter  
 156 into contracts, leases, or other transactions with any federal  
 157 agency, the state, any agency of the state, the County of  
 158 Pinellas, or with any other public body of the state.

159 (h)~~(i)~~ To do all acts and things necessary or convenient  
 160 for the conduct of its business and the general welfare of the  
 161 authority in order to carry out the powers granted to it by this  
 162 part or any other law.

163 (i)~~(j)~~ To prescribe and promulgate rules and regulations  
 164 as it deems necessary for the purposes of this act.

165 Section 14. Window coverings and advertisements.-

166 (1) Any new window covering or advertisement must adhere  
 167 to requirements provided in section 316.2954, Florida Statutes.

168 (2) The authority shall not engage in any non-paid  
 169 advertising, promotion, or messaging on their assets; however,  
 170 this subsection does not apply to any acknowledgement of  
 171 veterans as defined in section 1.01, Florida Statutes, or any  
 172 acknowledgement of a holiday listed in section 110.117, Florida  
 173 Statutes.

174 Section 15. Best budget practices.-The authority must  
 175 abide by the best budgetary guidelines as outlined by, but not

176 limited to, the Florida Government Finance Officers Association  
177 and the Government Finance Officers Association.

178 Section 16. Lane elimination, lane repurposing, lane diet,  
179 or bus lane allocation requests, recommendations, or  
180 applications.-

181 (1) Any lane elimination, lane repurposing, lane diet, or  
182 bus lane allocation request, recommendation, or application  
183 relating to a public transit project must be approved by a two-  
184 thirds vote of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority Board in  
185 a public meeting with a 30-day public notice and then presented  
186 to the Pinellas Board of County Commissioners prior to a final  
187 two-thirds vote of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority.

188 (2) The authority shall not have a lane elimination, lane  
189 repurposing, lane diet, or bus lane allocation office, board,  
190 employee, or any other actor whose purpose is to eliminate,  
191 reallocate, or repurpose public lanes for the usage of the  
192 authority.

193 (3) This section does not apply to any local or  
194 municipally owned roadway.

195 (4) This section shall include any new service of any  
196 design or name that would include plans for lane elimination,  
197 lane repurposing, lane diet, or bus lane allocation calling for  
198 the loss of an existing lane of a vehicular roadway to bus only  
199 use or Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes.

200 Section 17. Semiannual reporting.-

201        (1) The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority shall  
 202        semiannually report the following to the Pinellas Board of  
 203        County Commissioners:

204            (a) Any gifts accepted in exchange for contracts.

205            (b) Any contract over \$500,000.

206            (c) Any sale, lease, or transfer of any property or  
 207        interest over \$500,000.

208            (d) Ridership performance and metrics.

209        (2) The Pinellas Board of County Commissioners may call  
 210        for in-person presentations of these reports at a minimum of  
 211        once a year.

212        Section 18. Severability clause.—

213            (1) This act is not intended, nor may it be construed, to  
 214        conflict with existing, relevant state or federal law.

215            (2) If any provision of this act or its application to any  
 216        person or circumstances is held invalid, the invalidity does not  
 217        affect other provisions or applications of this act which can be  
 218        given effect without the invalid provision or application, and  
 219        to this end the provisions of this act are severable.

220        Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.