

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Florida State University
 3 College of Law Election Law Center; creating s.
 4 1004.6494, F.S.; establishing the Florida State
 5 University Election Law Center within the Florida
 6 State University College of Law; defining the term
 7 "election law"; providing the goals of the center;
 8 authorizing the center to take specified actions and
 9 conduct specified business; authorizing and
 10 encouraging specified entities to cooperate with and
 11 share certain information with the center; providing
 12 that certain requirements apply to such sharing of
 13 information; providing for funding of the center;
 14 providing requirements for the leadership of the
 15 center; providing duties of such leadership; providing
 16 requirements for specified activities of the center;
 17 providing an effective date.

18
 19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20
 21 **Section 1. Section 1004.6494, Florida Statutes, is created**
 22 **to read:**

23 1004.6494 The Florida State University Election Law
 24 Center.-

25 (1) There is established the Florida State University

26 | Election Law Center within the Florida State University College
 27 | of Law.

28 | (2) For purposes of this section, the term "election law"
 29 | means any issues relating to voting rights; election
 30 | administration; election emergencies; election integrity; voter
 31 | registration and voter registration databases; cyber issues or
 32 | other technical issues relating to elections; federal, state,
 33 | and local legal provisions governing the electoral process;
 34 | election contests for any federal, state, or local office;
 35 | matters relating to the electoral college or the casting,
 36 | counting, or validity of electoral votes; federal and state
 37 | campaign finance law; election audits; apportionment and
 38 | redistricting; doctrines relating to justiciability, civil
 39 | procedure, and remedies which may arise in election-related
 40 | cases; and the historical, empirical, and comparative aspects of
 41 | these topics, as well as philosophical and theoretical issues
 42 | relating to democracy, democratic theory, and republicanism more
 43 | broadly.

44 | (3) The goals of the center are to:

45 | (a) Conduct and promote rigorous, objective, nonpartisan,
 46 | evidence-based research concerning important constitutional,
 47 | statutory, and regulatory issues relating to election law.

48 | (b) Plan and host events to allow students, scholars,
 49 | legislators, judges, election administrators, attorneys, and
 50 | members of the public to learn about the electoral process and

51 election law.

52 (c) Develop and sponsor publicly accessible materials and
53 resources concerning elections and election law.

54 (d) Assist students in learning about, gaining practical
55 experience with, and pursuing career opportunities relating to
56 election law.

57 (e) Enhance the Florida State University College of Law's
58 reputation as a nationally respected source for cutting-edge
59 legal scholarship and technical legal expertise.

60 (f) Serve as a credible, objective, nonpartisan resource
61 to address election law inquiries from federal, state, and local
62 election officials and the Florida Legislature and its staff.

63 (g) Bolster understanding of the electoral process and
64 promote public confidence in the state's electoral system.

65 (h) Develop objective, evidence-based analysis, best
66 practices, and potential reforms for statutes, regulations, and
67 policies governing elections to:

68 1. Enable electoral systems to deal more effectively with
69 natural disasters and other emergencies which can impede or
70 undermine an election.

71 2. Bolster public confidence in the electoral process.

72 3. Ensure that United States citizens who meet the state's
73 voter qualification requirements have a reasonable, adequate,
74 and safe opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

75 4. Minimize the possibility of mistake, fraud, violations,

76 accidents, or other irregularities impacting elections.

77 (4) In order to carry out the goals set forth in this
78 section, the center is authorized to:

79 (a) Hire necessary faculty and staff pursuant to s.
80 1001.741 and develop and teach courses relating to election law.

81 (b) Hold events, including workshops, symposia,
82 roundtables, interviews, public discussions, lectures, and
83 conferences.

84 (c) Conduct, facilitate, and sponsor research relating to
85 election law in order to publish or otherwise make publicly
86 available articles, reports, analyses, databases, or websites
87 relating to election law issues.

88 (d) Provide training and continuing education for the
89 federal and state judiciaries and judicial organizations,
90 attorneys, Department of State personnel, supervisors of
91 elections and their employees, and other election
92 administrators.

93 (e) Provide formal or informal assistance to the
94 Legislature, as well as government entities or officials at the
95 federal, state, or county levels, concerning elections or
96 election law, including, but not limited to, research, reports,
97 public comments, testimony, or briefs.

98 (f) Provide scholarships and research assistantships to
99 outstanding students interested in election law and sponsor
100 fellowships to pay for qualified students to work with the

101 center or at any local, state, or federal government office or
102 nonpartisan entity that deals with election law.

103 (g) Partner with other centers, programs, institutes, and
104 associations, as appropriate, to promote the center's goals.

105 (5) The Department of State, supervisors of elections,
106 State Library, and Florida State Archives may and are encouraged
107 to cooperate and share with the center electronic copies of
108 information or data in their possession, custody, or control
109 upon request of the center's director to further the goals
110 established in subsection (3), provided that the center and its
111 employees are subject to, and store such information or data
112 consistent with, comparable confidentiality and security
113 requirements as apply to the Department of State, supervisors of
114 elections, and their employees.

115 (6) Funding for the center is as provided in the General
116 Appropriations Act. The center may also accept charitable
117 donations, grants, and other university funds.

118 (7) The center shall be led by a faculty director who
119 shall be a tenured member of the faculty at the Florida State
120 University College of Law. The faculty director shall be
121 appointed by the dean of the College of Law. The center's day-
122 to-day operations shall be conducted by an executive director.
123 The faculty director, in consultation with the executive
124 director, shall:

125 (a) Establish programs that promote the center's goals.

126 (b) Develop the budget and disburse the funds
127 appropriated, donated, or provided to the center.

128 (c) Hire employees for the center.

129 (d) Oversee the center's research, education, and training
130 programs, events, and work product.

131 (8) The center's research, work, activities, filings,
132 speakers, events, and operations are subject to academic freedom
133 protections. The center and its faculty and staff may not be
134 compelled to conduct, consult on, or otherwise assist in any
135 research or initiatives by any outside federal, state, or local
136 official or agency or private person or entity. The center shall
137 seek to promote intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity, as
138 defined in s. 1001.706(13)(a).

139 **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.