

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Office of Faith and Community;
3 creating s. 14.311, F.S.; providing legislative
4 findings; establishing the Office of Faith and
5 Community within the Executive Office of the Governor
6 for a specified purpose; specifying the duties of the
7 Office of Faith and Community; providing for the
8 appointment of a liaison for faith and community;
9 specifying the duties of the liaison for faith and
10 community; amending s. 14.31, F.S.; providing that the
11 Office of Faith and Community provides administrative
12 support to the Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based
13 Advisory Council; providing an effective date.

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 **Section 1. Section 14.311, Florida Statutes, is created to**
18 **read:**

19 14.311 Office of Faith and Community.—

20 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that
21 faith-based, community-based, and nonprofit-based organizations,
22 otherwise known as faith and community networks, have long been
23 the cornerstone of prosperous and flourishing societies, serving
24 as the original model of community care. Faith and community
25 networks play an integral role in serving the most vulnerable

persons of a community, including foster children, foster families, kinship caregivers, single parents, persons in poverty, veterans, persons with unique abilities, children in the juvenile justice system, and vulnerable adults. Faith and community networks offer a more impactful, efficient, and viable long-term solution, wholly apart from or in partnership with governmental programs. The impact of faith and community networks is greatly enhanced by the reduction of unnecessary bureaucracy through enhanced collaboration, communication, and connection with civil service systems. Responsible connections with faith and community networks are a just and necessary component of good governance in pursuit of greater societal growth in this state. Additionally, greater, more responsible investments in such efforts have demonstrated an exponential yield of taxpayer savings, efficiency of governance, and effectiveness of care. It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to establish and create outlets of governmental infrastructure to preserve, protect, advance, and better connect the faith and community networks of this state for the greater social and economic benefit of all.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish an Office of Faith and Community within the Executive Office of the Governor, as well as the role of a liaison for faith and community, in order to better connect with, communicate with, and provide resources to this state's faith-based and community-

51 based organizations.

52 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF FAITH AND COMMUNITY.—

53 (a) The Office of Faith and Community is established
54 within the Executive Office of the Governor. The head of the
55 office is the liaison for faith and community or a director
56 appointed by the liaison who reports to the liaison.

57 (b) The primary purpose of the office is to better serve
58 the most vulnerable persons of this state through more robust
59 and connected faith and community networks in coordination with
60 state resources.

61 (c) The office shall:

62 1. Advocate for faith-based and community-based
63 organizations seeking access to, direction from, or support from
64 state agencies.

65 2. Establish and operate the Florida Faith and Community
66 Phone, a dedicated phone line for faith-based and community-
67 based leaders in this state to connect with the Executive Office
68 of the Governor.

69 3. Establish meaningful lines of communication to connect
70 with and provide resources to faith-based and community-based
71 organizations in this state. The office shall deliver relevant
72 and useful information from the Executive Office of the Governor
73 and state agencies to the faith and community networks in this
74 state.

75 4. Develop and provide resources for enhanced connection

76 between civil service systems, state agencies, and faith-based
77 and community-based organizations in this state. Specifically,
78 the office shall use technology to connect state and local
79 faith-based, community-based, and nonprofit-based organizations
80 to address the identified needs of a community.

81 5. In coordination with the heads of the executive
82 agencies, identify bureaucratic or regulatory burdens within
83 state government that unnecessarily restrict, impede, or
84 otherwise burden faith-based and community-based organizations
85 from their involvement with, collaboration with, or service to
86 the most vulnerable persons in this state.

87 6. Provide administrative support to the Florida Faith-
88 based and Community-based Advisory Council under s. 14.31.

89 (4) LIAISON FOR FAITH AND COMMUNITY.—

90 (a) The position of the liaison for faith and community is
91 established within the Executive Office of the Governor, and the
92 liaison shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the
93 Governor.

94 (b) The duties of the liaison for faith and community
95 include, but are not limited to:

96 1. Serving as a senior advisor of faith-based and
97 community-based issues to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and
98 senior leadership within the Executive Office of the Governor.

99 2. Leading the Office of Faith and Community and executing
100 the objectives outlined in this section.

101 3. Engaging, advising, and coordinating with the heads of
102 the executive agencies in the provision of faith-based and
103 community-based initiatives in relevant state agencies as
104 determined by the Governor.

105 **Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section**
106 **14.31, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

107 14.31 Florida Faith-based and Community-based Advisory
108 Council.—

109 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL.—

110 (a) The Florida Faith-based and Community-based Advisory
111 Council, an advisory council as defined in s. 20.03, is
112 established and assigned to the Executive Office of the
113 Governor. The council shall be administratively housed within
114 the Executive Office of the Governor and receive administrative
115 support from the Office of Faith and Community.

116 **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.