

By Senator Yarborough

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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:

16  
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 faith-  
21           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  
26           persons of a community, including foster children, foster  
27           families, kinship caregivers, single parents, persons in  
28           poverty, veterans, persons with unique abilities, children in  
29           the juvenile justice system, and vulnerable adults. Faith and

4-01251-25

2025820\_\_

30 community networks offer a more impactful, efficient, and viable  
31 long-term solution, wholly apart from or in partnership with  
32 governmental programs. The impact of faith and community  
33 networks is greatly enhanced by the reduction of unnecessary  
34 bureaucracy through enhanced collaboration, communication, and  
35 connection with civil service systems. Responsible connections  
36 with faith and community networks are a just and necessary  
37 component of good governance in pursuit of greater societal  
38 growth in this state. Additionally, greater, more responsible  
39 investments in such efforts have demonstrated an exponential  
40 yield of taxpayer savings, efficiency of governance, and  
41 effectiveness of care. It is therefore the intent of the  
42 Legislature to establish and create outlets of governmental  
43 infrastructure to preserve, protect, advance, and better connect  
44 the faith and community networks of this state for the greater  
45 social and economic benefit of all.

46 (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to establish an  
47 Office of Faith and Community within the Executive Office of the  
48 Governor, as well as the role of a liaison for faith and  
49 community, in order to better connect with, communicate with,  
50 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 within  
54 the Executive Office of the Governor. The head of the office is  
55 the liaison for faith and community or a director appointed by  
56 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

4-01251-25

2025820\_\_

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, using  
78 technology to connect faith-based ministries and nonprofits with  
79 local faith-based and community-based organizations to address  
80 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-

4-01251-25

2025820\_\_

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.