

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Children, Families, and Elder Affairs

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BILL: SB 720  
INTRODUCER: Senator Young  
SUBJECT: Children's Initiatives  
DATE: January 8, 2018      REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

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|    | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION             |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. | Preston | Hendon         | CF        | <b>Pre-meeting</b> |
| 2. | _____   | _____          | CA        | _____              |
| 3. | _____   | _____          | RC        | _____              |

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**I. Summary:**

SB 720 codifies the Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood Promise Zone and the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition in Miami that are currently in existence and have been designated by the Ounce of Prevention Fund (Ounce) as a Florida children's initiative pursuant to section 409.147, F.S. The bill provides that the initiatives are designed to encompass an area large enough to include all necessary components of community life, but small enough to reach every member of each neighborhood who wishes to participate.

The bill is anticipated to have no fiscal impact on the state and has an effective date of July 1, 2018.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Harlem Children's Zone**

The Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) began in 1970 as an organization working with young children and their families as the city's first truancy-prevention program.<sup>1</sup> In the early 1990s, the HCZ ran a pilot project that brought a range of support services to a single block. The idea was to address all the problems that poor families were facing including crumbling apartments, failing schools, violent crime, and chronic health problems.<sup>2</sup>

Believing that for children to do well, their families have to do well, and for families to do well, their community must do well, the HCZ works to strengthen families as well as empowering them to have a positive impact on their children's development. The two fundamental principles of the HCZ are to help kids in a sustained way, starting as early in their lives as possible, and to

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<sup>1</sup> Harlem Children's Zone, available at <http://www.hcz.org/index.php/about-us/history/> (last visited December 19, 2017). The organization was then known as the Rheedlen Centers for Children and Families.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

create a critical mass of adults around them who understand what it takes to help children succeed.<sup>3</sup>

The HCZ Project began as a one-block pilot in the 1990s, then following a 10-year business plan to ensure its best-practice programs were operating as planned, it expanded to 24 blocks, then 60 blocks, then ultimately 97 blocks. The HCZ became a model among nonprofits that began carefully evaluating and tracking the results of their work. Those evaluation results enabled staff to see if programs were achieving their objectives and to take corrective actions if they were not.<sup>4</sup>

### **Children's Zones in Florida**

Using the Harlem Children's Zone as a model, the Legislature created children's zones in Florida in 2008.<sup>5</sup> The stated policy and purpose for the zones was:

It is the policy of this state to provide the necessary means to assist local communities, the children and families who live in those communities, and the private sector in creating a sound educational, social, and economic environment. To achieve this objective, the state intends to provide investments sufficient to encourage community partners to commit financial and other resources to severely disadvantaged areas. The purpose of this section is to establish a process that clearly identifies the severely disadvantaged areas and provides guidance for developing a new social service paradigm that systematically coordinates programs that address the critical needs of children and their families and for directing efforts to rebuild the basic infrastructure of the community. The Legislature, therefore, declares the creation of children's zones, through the collaborative efforts of government and the private sector, to be a public purpose.<sup>6</sup>

The 2008 legislation and the amending 2009 legislation relating to children's initiatives also contained the following provisions:<sup>7</sup>

- Created a nominating process for areas within communities to be designated as children's zones and provided for the creation of a planning team, a strategic community plan, and focus areas to be included in the plan;
- Required the creation of a not for profit corporation to implement and govern a designated children's zone;

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<sup>3</sup> Harlem Children's Zone, available at <https://hcz.org/about-us/> (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Chapter 2008-96, Laws of Fla. In 2009, the term "children's zone" was changed to "children's initiative." Shortly after the 2008 legislation was signed into law, the HCZ notified the Florida Legislature that they had trademarked the term "children's zone" and the state was no longer able to use the term. Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> Section 409.147, F.S., provides that a county or municipality or other designated area may apply to the Ounce to designate an area as a children's initiative. The area must first adopt a resolution stating that 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. The county or municipality must then establish a children's initiative planning team and develop and adopt a strategic community plan. Once a county or municipality has completed these steps, they must create a not-for-profit corporation to facilitate fundraising and secure broad community ownership of the children's initiative. 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.

- Created a ten-year project within the Liberty City neighborhood in Miami to be known as the Miami Children's Initiative (MCI); and
- Required the Department of Children and Families to contract with an existing private nonprofit corporation, incorporated for certain specified purposes, to implement the newly created Miami Children's Initiative.<sup>8</sup>

Florida children's initiatives were created 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 its boundaries. There are currently three Florida children's initiatives that have been recognized in statute; the Miami Children's Initiative, Inc., the New Town Success Zone in Jacksonville, and the Parramore Kidz Zone in Orlando.<sup>9</sup>

### **Miami Children's Initiative**

The idea for the Miami Children's Initiative dates back to 2006, when a group of Liberty City community leaders, local politicians and residents came together to try and determine possible solutions to perceived problems in the community. Liberty City was once a thriving neighborhood for many African Americans, but the high concentration of low-income housing projects, the exit of the area's businesses, increased joblessness, low performing schools, growing poverty, crime, juvenile delinquency, drugs and poor health had eroded the quality of life.<sup>10</sup>

Creation of the MCI in 2008 brought residents and local business people, as well as leaders in health care, education and human services, together to begin to formulate the foundation for this community-wide initiative. Today, the initiative has grown to include early childhood programs, K-12 programs, student enrichment and development programs, an asthma initiative, a fresh food co-op, community vegetable gardens and a gym and fitness facility.<sup>11</sup>

### **New Town Success Zone**

After a trip by city officials to Harlem and a review of a number of Jacksonville neighborhoods, the New Town community was selected by community leadership of Jacksonville in 2008 as the site for a Florida children's initiative. In 2009, a strategic plan was developed and work began on the New Town Success Zone.<sup>12</sup> The initiative's mission is to provide a place-based continuum of services from prenatal to college, the military or some form of postsecondary training for the children and their families living in the neighborhood.<sup>13</sup> In the first five year report to the

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter 2009-43, Laws of Fla.

<sup>9</sup> Section 409.147, F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Miami Children's Initiative, available at: <http://www.iamlibertycity.org/> (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>11</sup> Miami Children's Initiative, available at: <http://www.iamlibertycity.org/our-work/our-work/> (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> The New Town Success Zone, available at: <http://jaxkids.org/afterschool-summer/new-town-success-zone/>. Also see: New Town Success Zone Five Years Later, available at: <http://www.metrojacksonville.com/article/2013-may-new-town-success-zone-five-years-later> (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

community, the New Town Success Zone has reported higher FCAT scores, an improvement in school promotion rates, and a reduction in violent crimes, theft and truancy since 2008.<sup>14</sup>

### **Parramore Kidz Zone**

The Parramore Kidz Zone (PKZ) was launched by the City of Orlando on July 1, 2006, as part of a comprehensive effort to revitalize Orlando's highest crime, highest poverty neighborhood. The Parramore Kidz Zone replicates some aspects of the Harlem Children's Zone to create positive child-rearing conditions that will result in lower teen pregnancy rates, improved school performance, and decreased juvenile crime and child abuse rates. The Parramore Kidz Zone was implemented by a coalition of nonprofit organizations and neighborhood residents and was designated by the Ounce as a Florida children's initiative in June 2009.<sup>15</sup> The initiative was designed to invest in those things that make a difference in children's lives, such as quality early childhood education, after school programs, programs that build family economic success, youth development programs for teenagers, access to health care, and mentoring.<sup>16</sup>

Since 2006, program evaluators have documented a 61% decline in juvenile arrests, a 56% decline in teen pregnancies, and a 38% decline in child abuse cases in the neighborhood since PKZ started, as well as across-the-board increases in the percentage of elementary, middle and high school students performing at grade level in math and reading. Every year the number of Parramore youth who attend college increases. Today, 70 PKZ youth are in college, all of whom are the first generation in their families to attend.<sup>17</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

**Section 1** amends s. 409.147, F.S., relating to children's initiatives, to add the Tampa Sulphur Springs Neighborhood of Promise Success Zone and the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition as entities designated by the Ounce of Prevention Fund as children's initiatives.

The bill provides that the initiatives are subject to Florida public records laws, public meeting laws, and procurement laws, and that the initiatives are designed to encompass an area large enough to include all necessary components of community life, but small enough to reach every member of each neighborhood who wishes to participate.

**Section 2** provides an effective date of July 1, 2018.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

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<sup>14</sup> New Town Success Zone, Five Year Report to the Community, *available at*: [https://issuu.com/jermynshannonel/docs/newtown\\_5yr\\_report](https://issuu.com/jermynshannonel/docs/newtown_5yr_report) (last visited December 19, 2017)

<sup>15</sup> The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, Parramore Kidz Zone, *available at*: [https://www.ounce.org/fci\\_communities.html](https://www.ounce.org/fci_communities.html) (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> City of Orlando, Parramore Kidz Zone, *available at*: <http://www.cityoforlando.net/parramorekidzzone/> (last visited December 19, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

The bill substantially amends s. 409.147 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:****A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

**B. Amendments:**

None.