

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2016 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Community Affairs

CS/HB 479 — Special Districts

by Local Government Affairs Subcommittee and Rep. Metz and others (SB 956 by Senator Stargel)

Special districts are used to provide a variety of local services and generally are funded through the imposition of ad valorem taxes, fees, and charges on the users of those services. There are two types of special districts: independent special districts, which typically are created by special act and operate independently of any local general-purpose government, and dependent special districts, which typically are created by local ordinance and are subject to the control of a local general-purpose government.

The bill requires a special district to publish additional information on its website, including a calendar of public meetings, and ensure other current budgetary information is maintained on its website for longer periods of time. The bill also reorganizes the oversight provisions of ch. 189, F.S., to increase clarity and avoid duplication. The bill clarifies the power of the Legislature to create dependent special districts. The bill revises the process for the Department of Economic Opportunity to declare a special district inactive and clarifies the power of the Legislature to dissolve inactive independent special districts by general law. The bill also makes conforming changes to a number of related statutes.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect October 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 36-0; House 110-0