

Committee on Infrastructure and Security

CS/SB 7018 — Essential State Infrastructure

by Appropriations Committee and Infrastructure and Security Committee

The bill contains various provisions relating to essential state infrastructure, including provisions relating to emergency staging areas, utility permit application processing for use of county or municipal rights-of-way, development of a recommended plan for electric vehicle charging stations along the State Highway System, and use of agricultural land subject to a conservation easement for construction of a public or private linear facility and right of access. Specifically, the bill:

- Authorizes the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to plan, design, and construct staging areas for emergency response on the turnpike system. These areas are for the staging of emergency supplies, equipment, and personnel to facilitate the prompt provision of emergency assistance to the public in response to a declared state of emergency;
- Directs the FDOT, in consultation with the Division of Emergency Management, to consider specified factors when selecting a proposed site; authorizes the FDOT to acquire property necessary for such staging areas; and requires the FDOT to give priority consideration to placement of such staging areas in counties with a population of 200,000 or less in which a multi-use corridor of regional significance is located;
- Grants the FDOT power to authorize other uses of a staging area and requires that staging-area projects be included in the FDOT's work program;
- Provides that a permit application by a county or municipality to use the right-of-way on any public road for a utility must be processed and acted upon within the expedited time frames of the "Advanced Wireless Infrastructure Deployment Act," s. 337.401(7)(d)7.,8., and 9., F.S.;
- Requires the FDOT, in coordination with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Office of Energy within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and any other public or private entities as necessary or appropriate, to develop and recommend a master plan for the development of electric vehicle charging station infrastructure along the State Highway System. The bill sets out a number of legislative findings and sets up a division of the workload between the FDOT and the PSC of goals and objectives of the recommended plan based on area of expertise;
- Authorizes the FDOT, the PSC, and the Office of Energy to agree to explore other issues deemed necessary or appropriate for purposes of the required report and requires the recommended master plan to be developed and submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2021. The plan must include recommendations for legislation and may include other recommendations as determined by the FDOT. The bill also requires the FDOT, by December 1, 2020, to file a status report containing any preliminary recommendations, including recommendations for legislation to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House; and
- Clarifies that ss. 570.71 and 704.06, F.S., not be interpreted to prohibit lands traditionally used for agriculture that are subject to a conservation easement from being utilized for the

construction of any public or private linear facility and right of access, if such rights are voluntarily negotiated.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2020.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 97-19