

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Date: February 9, 1998 Revised: _____

Subject: State Employees

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>Wilson</u>	<u>Wilson</u>	<u>GO</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>WM</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill repeals a mandatory expiration date on legislation which established a telecommuting program for state employees.

This bill substantially repeals section 3 of chapter 94-113, Laws of Florida. In the absence of passage of this legislation, section 110.171, Florida Statutes, will be repealed on October 1, 1998.

II. Present Situation:

Chapter 90-291, L.O.F., authorized the development of a pilot, off-site state employee work arrangement in which eligible employees may undertake job responsibilities through the use of automated equipment. At the completion of the 2-year exploratory period and following a favorable review by the now Department of Management Services, the concept was expanded statewide. There are specific reporting responsibilities of the program coordinator to the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Information Technology Resources.

Such “telecommuting” relationships are common in the private sector where employment relationships involve routinized tasks or the development of intellectual products not unique to a traditional office-based environment. State agency telecommuting programs are optional with each agency but they must adhere to reporting requirements established in s. 110.171, F.S. As of July 1997, there were 259 state employees participating in such nontraditional work site arrangements.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill repeals the mandatory expiration of the program, its specific data reporting elements, and its statutory reporting requirement to the joint legislative committee. Section 110.171, F.S., is left intact.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Each public employer assumes an initial start-up cost of about \$1500 per site. This deflects the costs away from the affected employee. The employee also benefits from the routine avoidance of transportation expenses associated with commuting to an office.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The employer incurs a \$1500 per site start-up expense but benefits from lower square foot allocations of work space per employee. The Joint Committee staff reports that in the biennium ending in Fiscal Year 1997 several state agencies reduced office space or closed offices altogether. Telecommuting may also help agencies recruit personnel in hard to fill locations or positions and may act as an incentive to disabled employees who find the familiarity and accommodations of their home preferable to those available in a distant office building.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
