

# 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.)

BILL: CS/SB 340

SPONSOR: Senator Forman

SUBJECT: Human Rights Advocacy Committee

DATE: March 16, 2000 REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Dowds</u>	<u>Whiddon</u>	<u>CF</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>GO</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

## I. Summary:

The bill provides legislative intent for the Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee (SHRAC) and district human rights advocacy committees (HRACs) and sets forth two new definitions; “client” and “client services.” The way these terms are defined would have the following impact:

- ◆ The individuals for whom the SHRAC and the district HRACs’ investigative and monitoring service and authority would apply is designated based on the client groups of identified sections and their applicable chapters in Florida Statute that are specified in the definition of “client,” instead of based on individuals receiving programs and services offered by the Department of Children and Family Services, as is currently the case.
- ◆ The definition of “client services” extends the investigative and monitoring authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs to any service received by a client of the identified section and applicable chapter, regardless of its state agency location.

These definitions use the clients of the designated sections and applicable chapters to specify the individuals to be served by the SHRAC and the district HRACs, which is a broader scope of clients, programs and host state agencies than the current responsibility to the Department of Children and Family Services. The authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs is further expanded to include any additional programs that the individuals receive, even if these programs and state agencies are not identified in one of the designated chapters.

The bill replaces references to the Department of Children and Family Services with references to any state agency that provides either the services described in the chapters designated or client services. These substitutions provide for the broader scope of both the clients and programs to be represented on the statewide and district HRACs, as well as the state agencies subject to the investigative and monitoring authority of the SHRAC and district HRACs.

The authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs to monitor the delivery of services has been expanded to include contracted programs and facilities of the identified state agencies, in addition to the current specification of operated, funded, regulated, or licensed programs and facilities.

The bill modifies the SHRAC and the district HRACs' current restriction to accessing confidential adoption records so that access ceases when the adoption is finalized by the court. This would allow the SHRAC and the district HRACs access to a child's record during the required trial placement period prior to the finalization of the adoption. The SHRAC and district HRACs would also have access to the intended adoptive parents' record.

The SHRAC is designated as the entity responsible for submitting the statewide and district HRACs' annual budget to the Governor, instead of the Department of Children and Family Services.

The bill eliminates the ability of the SHRAC to appeal unresolved complaints to the Legislature. The procedures for appeal continue to provide the opportunity for unresolved complaints to be appealed to the director of the appropriate state agency (previously to the Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services), and then to the Governor.

The names of the "Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee" and "district human rights advocacy committee" is changed to the "Florida Statewide Advocacy Council" and "Florida local advocacy councils." The geographic areas for which each district HRAC has responsibility is changed from the Department of Children and Family Services districts to service areas that are designated by the SHRAC and are consistent with judicial boundaries. The allocation and areas of responsibility of the district HRACs are changed from allowing up to three committees in each of the 15 department districts, with District II allowed to have four committees, to a total number of local committees permitted statewide not to exceed 46. A number of modifications are made to the membership, terms, officers, and appointment process for both the SHRAC and the district HRACs.

The duties required of the Department of Children and Family Services to support referral of reports of abuse to the district HRACs, provision of client information, and utilization of the district HRACs' recommendations have been applied to each state agency that provides client services. The responsibility to provide a location and necessary supplies and clerical services to the district HRACs is shifted from the district administrator to the department.

This bill creates section 402.164 of the Florida Statutes. The bill also amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 39.001, 39.202, 39.302, 393.13, 394.459, 394.4595, 394.4597, 394.4598, 394.4599, 394.4615, 400.0067, 400.0089, 400.118, 400.141, 400.419, 400.428, 402.165, 402.166, 402.167, 415.1034, 415.104, 415.1055, 415.106, 415.107, and 430.04.

## **II. Present Situation:**

The Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee (SHRAC) was created by Florida law in 1975, within the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (now Department of Children and Family Services.) As specified in s. 402.165 (7), F.S., the SHRAC serves as an independent third-party mechanism for protecting the constitutional and human rights of any client within a

program or facility operated, funded, licensed, or regulated by the Department of Children and Family Services.

### **Responsibilities of the Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee**

Responsibilities of the SHRAC as specified in s. 402.165(7), F.S., include:

- ◆ Monitoring the delivery and use of services, programs, or facilities operated, funded, regulated, or licensed by the department;
- ◆ Receiving, investigating, and resolving reports of abuse or deprivation of constitutional and human rights referred by a district HRAC;
- ◆ Reviewing existing programs and services and new or revised programs of the department and making recommendations as to how the rights of clients are affected;
- ◆ Submitting an annual report to the Legislature, not later than December 30 of each year, presenting activities, recommendations, and complaints reviewed or developed by the SHRAC during the year;
- ◆ Conducting meetings at least six times a year;
- ◆ Developing and adopting uniform procedures to be used to carry out the purpose and responsibilities of the district HRACs;
- ◆ Monitoring the performance and activities of all district HRACs and providing technical assistance to members and staff of district HRACs;
- ◆ Providing for the development and presentation of a standardized training program for members of district HRACs.

Although the Department of Children and Family Services is responsible for providing administrative support to the SHRAC, the committee is not subject to control, supervision, or direction by the department in the performance of its duties (s. 402.165(1) F.S.).

Investigative authority of the SHRAC is provided for in s. 402.165(8), F.S. To carry out the responsibilities outlined above, the SHRAC is granted the authority to receive, investigate, seek to conciliate, hold hearings on, and act on complaints which allege any abuse or deprivation of constitutional or human rights of clients. The SHRAC has access to all client records, files, and reports from any program, service, or facility that is operated, funded, licensed, or regulated by the department. Access to records which are in the custody of other state agencies or departments of governments and which are material to the SHRAC's investigation is provided by this section. The SHRAC has standing to petition the circuit court for access to confidential client records. If the SHRAC obtains these records, however, the records and any subsequent actions or communications relating to the records are exempt from the provisions of s. 119.07(1), F.S., relating to open records.

Children in the Department of Children and Family Services' child protective services system are under the authority of the SHRAC, giving the SHRAC and district HRACs access to the child's file, including confidential records pertaining to the investigation of abuse, foster care placement, and termination of the natural parent's rights. However, the statute specifically prohibits the SHRAC from having access to confidential adoption records under ss. 39.0132, 63.022, and 63.162, F.S. Relative to which records along the dependency process moving toward adoption are accessible to the Statewide and district HRACs, an Attorney General Opinion (AGO 98-68) provided the Department of Children and Family Services with the following opinion: where the

parental rights to a child have been terminated and the child has been placed in the home of the intended adoptive parents pending final hearing (which by s. 63.122(1), F.S., must be held no sooner than 90 days after placement with the petitioner), records in the adoption file were considered confidential and not available to a district HRAC.

### **Scope of Statewide and District Human Rights Advocacy Committee Authority**

The responsibilities and investigative authority of both the SHRAC and district HRACs apply to any client served by the Department of Children and Family Services, whether the program or facility is operated, funded, licensed, or regulated by the department (ss. 402.165(7) and 402.166(7), F.S.). Currently, based on the programs delineated in s. 20.19(5)(b), F.S., as the responsibility of the Department of Children and Family Services, this scope of authority applies to basically the following programs: temporary assistance to families with dependent children; food stamps; welfare reform; state supplementation of the supplemental security income program; programs for persons with developmental disabilities; early intervention services for children and families at risk; intake services for protective investigation of abandoned, abused, and neglected children; interstate compact on the placement of children program; adoption; child care; out-of-home care program; other specialized services for children and families at-risk; and alcohol, drug abuse, and mental health programs. The aging and adult related services currently with the department (primarily protective services for the elderly and disabled adults, Community Care for Disabled Adults, and Home Care for Disabled Adults) are also included in the scope of authority for the SHRAC and the district HRACs.

When the SHRAC and district HRACs were created in 1975, the programs offered by the department (then the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services) and included in the SHRAC and district HRAC's scope of authority also included Children's Medical Services, child support enforcement, Medicaid, health programs, vocational rehabilitation, all of aging and adult services, and programs relating to delinquent youth (1975 Florida Statute, s. 20.19(3)(c)2). Given the statutory linkage to the Department of Children and Family Services programs and facilities, as the department was reorganized over the years, clients of the programs shifted out of the department and into other state agencies no longer had access to the services of the SHRAC and district HRACs.

### **Composition of the Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee**

The SHRAC is composed of 15 citizens appointed by the Governor, one from each service district of the Department of Children and Family Services. With the exception of the elected official, each person must have been a member of a district HRAC. The committee members must be representative of the following five groups of citizens:

- ◆ one elected public official;
- ◆ two providers who deliver services or programs to clients of the Department of Children and Family Services;
- ◆ four non-salaried representatives of non-profit agencies and civic groups;
- ◆ four non-salaried representatives of health and rehabilitative services consumer groups who are currently receiving, or have received, services from the department within the last 4 years, at least one of whom must be a consumer;

- ◆ four residents of the state who do not represent any of the foregoing groups, two of whom represent health-related professions and two of whom represent the legal profession.

SHRAC members are appointed to serve 3-year terms and may serve for two terms. A chairperson is elected to a 1-year term and may not serve as chairperson more than two terms.

### **District Human Rights Advocacy Committee**

Section 402.166(1), F.S., provides for at least one district HRAC in each service district of the Department of Children and Family Services. Each district can create up to three district HRACs for different areas of responsibility. District 2 is permitted to have four HRACs. The district administrator of the Department of Children and Family Services is required to assign staff to provide administrative support to the district HRACs.

Each district HRAC consists of seven to 15 members, each of whom are either appointed or approved by the Governor (ss. 402.166(2) and (3), F.S.). District HRAC representation is comprised as follows:

- ◆ 25 percent are or must have been clients of the Department of Children and Family Services within the last 4 years, except that one member of this group may be an immediate relative or legal representative of a current or former client;
- ◆ two providers who deliver services or programs to clients of the department, but not to exceed 25 percent of the district HRAC;
- ◆ two representatives of professional organizations, one of whom represents health-related professions and one of whom represents the legal profession.

District HRACs serve no more than two consecutive terms of 3 years, with the exception of prescribed staggered terms for initial appointments to newly created committees (s. 402.166(3), F.S.). A chairperson is elected by the district HRAC for a term of 1 year and may not serve more than two consecutive terms as chairperson (s. 402.166(4), F.S.).

Sections 402.166(7) and 402.166(8), F.S., provide for the responsibilities and investigative authority of the district HRACs which basically mirror those of SHRAC.

### **Duties of the Department of Children and Family Services**

The duties of the Department of Children and Family Services relating to both the SHRAC and the district HRACs are designated in s. 402.167, F.S. These duties include providing the following:

- ◆ Procedures by which the department district staff refers reports of abuse to district HRACs;
- ◆ Procedures by which client information is made available to members of the SHRAC and district HRACs;
- ◆ Procedures by which recommendations made by the SHRAC and the district HRACs are incorporated into the department's policies and procedures;
- ◆ Procedures by which members of SHRAC and the district HRACs are reimbursed for authorized expenditures;
- ◆ Providing for a location for the district HRACs;
- ◆ Providing for necessary equipment, office supplies, and clerical services.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill creates s. 402.164, F.S., which establishes legislative intent for the SHRAC and district HRACs. Specifically, the bill states that it is the intent of the Legislature that members of these committees “discover, monitor, investigate, and determine the presence of conditions or individuals that constitute a threat to the rights, health, safety, or welfare of persons who receive services from state agencies.”

#### **Responsibilities and Scope of Authority of Statewide and District Human Rights Advocacy Committees**

Section 402.164, F.S., also sets forth two new definitions to be used in ss. 402.164 through 402.167, F.S.: “client” and “client services.” The term “client” is provided to mean client as defined in ss. 393.063 (developmental services), 394.67 (mental health services), 397.311 (substance abuse services), or 400.960, F.S., (Intermediate Care Facilities for Developmentally Disabled Persons); forensic client or client as defined in s. 916.106, F.S., (forensic services for persons with mental illness, retardation, and autism); child or youth as defined in s. 39.01, F.S., (proceedings related to children); child as defined in 827.01, F.S., (abuse of children crimes); family as defined in s. 414.0252, F.S., (family self-sufficiency/WAGES); participant as defined in s. 400.551, F.S., (adult day care centers); resident as defined in s. 400.402, F.S., (assisted living facilities); Medicaid recipient or recipient as defined in s. 409.901, F.S., (Medicaid services); a child receiving child care as defined in s. 402.302, F.S., (child care); a disabled adult as defined in s. 410.032 or s. 410.603, F.S., (Home Care for Disabled Adults and Community Care for Disabled Adults); or victim as defined in ss. 39.01 or 415.102, F.S., (proceedings related to children and adult protective services), as each of these definitions applies within its respective chapter. “Client service” is defined as services provided to a client by a state agency or a service provider operated, funded, licensed, contracted, or regulated by the state. These definitions as used in ss. 402.165 through 402.167, F.S., will have the following impact:

- ◆ Instead of designating the investigative and monitoring authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs based on those individuals receiving services offered by the Department of Children and Family Services, the designation would be based on delineating the client group of identified sections and their applicable chapters in Florida Statute. This would provide continued services of the SHRAC and District HRACs to the individuals receiving services in the specified sections and chapters regardless of any future reorganizations.

The client groups designated would expand the SHRAC and district HRACs’ statutory authority to individuals receiving the following programs and services and their host state agencies: Guardian ad litem and guardian advocates (administered through the Office of State Court Administrator); assisted living facilities (licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration); adult day care centers (licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration); and Medicaid (administered by the Agency for Health Care Administration).

- ◆ While the definition of “client” targets the individuals to be served by the SHRAC and district HRACs based on the programs and services they receive which are included in the designated sections and chapters, the definition of “client service” extends the SHRAC and district

HRACs' monitoring and investigative authority to any other service provided to the client by a state agency or a service provider operated, funded, licensed, contracted or regulated by the state. This provision enables the SHRAC and district HRACs to examine comprehensively the circumstances and conditions being experienced by a client across all programs and services received, which are provided by a state agency or their service provider. This also appears to expand the investigative and monitoring authority, including access to records, to all state agencies serving the identified client, not just those offering programs in the designated sections and chapters.

The bill replaces references to the Department of Children and Family Services with references to any state agency that provides either the services described in the sections and chapters designated or client services. These substitutions provide for the broader scope of both the clients and programs to be represented on the statewide and district committees, as well as the state agencies subject to the investigative and monitoring authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs.

The authority of the SHRAC and the district HRACs to monitor the delivery of services has been expanded to include contracted programs and facilities of the identified state agencies, in addition to the current specification of operated, funded, regulated, or licensed programs and facilities. This further delineation of service providers offering state agency services will continue SHRAC and district HRACs' investigative and monitoring authority as state agency services are privatized and contracted out into community based systems.

The bill modifies the SHRAC and district HRACs' current restriction to access to confidential adoption records to be applied when the adoption is finalized by the court. This would allow the SHRAC and district HRACs access to the intended adoptive parent's records which includes such information as the home study, background check, and references. Maintaining the strict privacy of this information has been paramount to potential parents considering adoption. However, the child remains in the official custody of the state until the adoption is final. During the required trial placement prior to finalization of the adoption while the child is still in the custody of the state, the intended adoptive parent's record is also used as the record for the child and the recording of all pertinent information relative to the child from which the SHRAC and district HRACs can investigate and monitor allegations of abuse or deprivation of human rights.

Sections 402.165(8)(e) and 402.166.(8)(e), F.S., are amended to correct statutory language that persons who disclose confidential information obtained and used by the SHRAC or district HRACs have "committed," instead of are "guilty of," a misdemeanor of the second degree. This change in terminology more accurately reflects the commission of a crime, not the determination of guilt.

The bill provides that the SHRAC is responsible for submitting its annual budget to the Governor, instead of the department.

The bill eliminates the ability of the SHRAC to appeal unresolved complaints to the Legislature. The procedures for appeal continue to provide the opportunity for unresolved complaints to be appealed to the director of the appropriate state agency (previously to the Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services) and then to the Governor.

## **Statewide and District Human Rights Advocacy Committees Name and Composition**

The names of committees have been changed from “Statewide Human Rights Advocacy Committee” and “district human rights advocacy committees” to “Florida Statewide Advocacy Council” and “Florida local advocacy councils.” The term “human rights” has been removed to prevent confusion with other forms of human rights interests. The change to “council” is consistent with definitions of the terms “committee” and “council” as described in s. 20.03, F.S. In s. 20.03, F.S., the term “committee” refers to an advisory body created without specific statutory enactment for a time not to exceed 1 year or created by specific statutory enactment for a time not to exceed 3 years and appointed to study a specific problem and recommend a solution. A committee’s existence terminates upon the completion of its assignment. The term “council,” however, is defined as an advisory body created by specific statutory enactment and appointed to function on a continuing basis for the study of the problems arising in a specified functional or program area of state government and to provide recommendations and policy alternatives.

The geographic areas for which each district HRAC is responsible is changed from the Department of Children and Family Services districts to service areas that are designated by the SHRAC and are consistent with judicial boundaries. Chapter 99-219, L.O.F., directs the Department of Children and Family Services to develop a proposed plan to realign the districts of the department so that the district boundaries are consistent with the boundaries of the judicial circuits. If that realignment occurs, the bill’s modification will permit to the SHRAC to redesignate the service areas for the district HRACs as needed.

The allocation and areas of responsibility of the district HRACs are changed from allowing up to three committees in each of the 15 department districts, with District 2 allowed to have four committees, to a total number of local councils permitted statewide not to exceed 46. The SHRAC retains the authority to determine the number and areas of responsibility of the district HRACs within the delineated framework, but the local councils must be consistent with judicial boundaries. While the SHRAC is provided with more flexibility in creating local councils relative to targeting the focus of the councils and geographic regions to encompass, the total number of local councils allowed is unchanged.

The number of members of the SHRAC is maintained at 15 and at seven to 15 members for the district HRACs. However, the affiliation of the members for the SHRAC and the district HRACs is amended as follows:

- ◆ The membership of the SHRAC is to contain one member from each of the designated service areas, instead of one member from each of the Department of Children and Family Services districts.
- ◆ The specification for representation on the SHRAC in each of the five groups designated (totaling the 15) is amended to specify representation for four groups (totaling 9) with limitations on categories of representatives for the remaining 6 slots. The designation of the representation would be as follows:
  - ▶ One provider who delivers a client service;
  - ▶ Two non-salaried representatives of non-profit agencies or civic groups;
  - ▶ Four representatives of consumer groups currently receiving or having received client services within the last four years, one of whom must be a consumer of one or more



- client services (specification to the Department of Children and Family Services was eliminated);
- ▶ Two residents of the state who do not represent any of the foregoing groups, one of whom represents health-related professions and one of whom represents the legal profession;
  - ▶ Of the remaining members, no more than one is to be an elected official, no more than one a health professional, no more than one a legal professional, no more than one a provider, no more than two non-salaried representatives of non-profit agencies or civic groups, and no more than one individual who represents a clients services group not represented on the committee.
- ◆ The prohibition to the appointment of an employee of the Department of Children and Family Services has been modified to reflect any state agency, but only those employees involved in actual client services. This would allow a state agency employee who is working in a non-direct service position to serve on SHRAC.
  - ◆ The representatives specific to the Department of Children and Family Services were changed to state agencies that provide client services or recipients of client services. This broadens the programs, state agencies, consumers, and providers which can be represented on the SHRAC and district HRACs to reflect the scope of programs and services included in the authority of the committees.
  - ◆ Terms for the SHRAC and newly formed district HRACs would be changed from 3 to 4 years. For the SHRAC, this new term limit is retroactive to members in office on July 1, 2000. The terms for the initially staggered appointments to any newly created district HRACs were changed from 2 years to 4 years for the first half of the members and from 3 years to 2 years for the remaining members.
  - ◆ The requirement that members not serve more than two terms and officers not serve more than two terms was clarified to be two full terms.
  - ◆ For district HRACs' membership, the limitation on the number of individuals providing contracted services for clients of the state agencies (previously Department of Children and Family Services) was changed from 25 percent of the membership to no more than three individuals.
  - ◆ The requirement that 25 percent of the members be clients of the Department of Children and Family Services was changed to no more than four of the members can be recipients of one or more client services.
  - ◆ A Vice Chair is added to the officers for both the SHRAC and district HRACs. For district HRACs, the expiration of the term of the chair, and now vice chair, was amended to September 30th instead of the anniversary of the chair's election.
  - ◆ The requirement that a vacancy to the SHRAC and district HRACs be filled by a majority vote if the Governor has not made an appointment within 60 days was made permissive. However, filling of such vacancies in district HRACs would require the approval of the SHRAC with this bill.
  - ◆ The requirement to replace district HRAC members who fail to attend two-thirds of the regular committee meetings was made permissive.
  - ◆ The requirement that a list of candidates from the district HRAC in the area in which a vacancy on the SHRAC occurs be provided was made permissive.

### **Duties of the Department of Children and Family Services**

The following duties specified in s. 402.167, F.S., which applied solely to the Department of Children and Family Services have been amended to apply to each state agency that provides client services. To develop:

- ◆ Procedures by which the district state agency staff refer reports of abuse to the district HRACs;
- ◆ Procedures by which client information is made available to members of the SHRAC and the district HRACs;
- ◆ Procedures by which recommendations made by the SHRAC and the district HRACs are incorporated into the policies and procedures of state agencies.

Duties that remain the responsibility of the Department of Children and Family Services include the following:

- ◆ Providing for the location of district committees;
- ◆ Providing for necessary equipment, office supplies, and clerical services;
- ◆ Establishing procedures by which members are reimbursed for authorized expenditures.

Section 402.166(1), F.S., continues the Department of Children and Family Services' responsibility to assign staff to provide administrative support to the district HRACs. However, the section is modified to shift the responsibility from the district administrator to the department. This shift is intended to accommodate the anticipated reorganization of the department.

The bill provides that this act take effect on July 1, 2000.

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

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

None.

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

None.

##### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

##### **D. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

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

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The Department of Children and Family Services reports that SB 340 would require the department to absorb additional administrative support costs as it is anticipated that the workload of the district HRACs would increase with the addition of cases from other state agencies. Specifically, the additional administrative support costs anticipated by the department is an increase in the travel expenses of the volunteer district HRAC members and time of district staff to process the travel reimbursement requests for any additional cases investigated as a result of the expansion to other state agencies. The exact amount of increase in these administrative costs is indeterminate since the additional number of cases that will be undertaken by the district HRACs is unknown. A September 1997 survey of the districts determined that the administrative support costs for the district HRACs at that time was \$428,074. The department suggests that other state agencies should be required to share in the cost of administrative support to the district HRACs.

In considering the potential for increased travel expenses as a result of the expansion to other state agencies, it should be noted that the travel of the district HRAC members to monitor and investigate cases consists of primarily local travel within their district, which will include local mileage and meals. As an example, a trip requiring 150 miles of travel and a meal would total approximately \$50.00. Any increase in the number of cases that the may be undertaken by district HRAC members would likely not result in high cost travel expenses such as airfare or hotel. The time required to monitor and investigate any additional cases is unpaid time of the volunteer district HRAC members.

The Agency of Health Care Administration (AHCA) interprets the bill to broaden the authority of the SHRAC to all services provided, regulated, funded, or licensed by any state agency, including services of AHCA. They do not anticipate this legislation to have a substantial impact on their agency.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

As required by s. 400.0067(2)(g), F.S., a Memorandum of Agreement between the SHRAC and the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Council exists to coordinate their activities. Local

committees and councils develop similar agreements which can either mirror the state agreement or reflect the agreed upon coordination for that area. These agreements delineate the responsibilities of each committee/council for receiving and investigating complaints regarding residents of long-term care facilities, and in turn, prevent the duplication of their respective services.

**VIII. Amendments:**

None.

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

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