

STORAGE NAME: h1343s1.ccc.doc
DATE: March 5, 2002

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AS FURTHER REVISED BY THE
COUNCIL FOR COMPETITIVE COMMERCE
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: CS/HB 1343
RELATING TO: Small County Technical Assistance Program
SPONSOR(S): Council for Competitive Commerce & Representative Stansel
TIED BILL(S): None

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COUNCIL(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER AFFAIRS (CCC) YEAS 7 NAYS 0
 - (2) FISCAL POLICY AND RESOURCES YEAS 12 NAYS 0
 - (3) COUNCIL FOR COMPETITIVE COMMERCE YEAS 12 NAYS 0
 - (4)
 - (5)
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I. SUMMARY:

CS/HB 1343 transfers the oversight of the Small County Technical Assistance Program (program) from the Office of the Comptroller to the Commissioner of Agriculture (Commissioner). The purpose of the program, as stated in s. 163.05(3), F.S., "...is to provide technical assistance to small counties to enable them to implement workable solutions to financial and administrative problems." The program, initiated in 1993 through a \$250,000 appropriation from the Legislature, began by serving 31 counties with populations less than 50,000. Subsequently, the program has been expanded to \$500,000 and serves 32 counties with populations less than 75,000.

The bill also provides for minor changes in the criteria used by the Commissioner for establishing contract providers, as well as expanding the areas of assistance provided to include economic and community development.

And lastly, the bill repeals Specific Appropriation 2252 in the 2002-03 General Appropriations Act and an identical amount is appropriated to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services from the General Revenue Fund for the purpose of program funding. The effective date of this legislation is June 30, 2002.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

For the past eight years, the Florida Counties Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization that is an adjunct of the Florida Association of Counties, has been awarded the contract to deliver technical assistance to the rural counties of Florida through the Small County Technical Assistance Services Program (program). The purpose of the program, as stated in s. 163.05(3), F.S., "...is to provide technical assistance to small counties to enable them to implement workable solutions to financial and administrative problems." The Office of the Comptroller has provided oversight since the inception of the program. The program, initiated in 1993 through a \$250,000 appropriation from the legislature, began by serving 31 counties with populations less than 50,000. Subsequently, the program has been expanded to \$500,000 and serves 32 counties with populations less than 75,000.

Based on the goals and performance outcomes established for the program through June 30, 2001, the program's accomplishments include:

- One hundred percent of the, then eligible, participating small counties have enhanced or initiated at least one alternative revenue source.
- Ninety-four percent of the participating small counties have adopted the School Siting-based comprehensive plan amendments as required by the Florida Department of Community Affairs.
- Of those counties receiving intensive program grant or loan assistance, seventy-nine percent of the grants or loans applied for with program assistance were awarded. This greatly exceeded the twenty-five percent goal.
- Twenty-four percent of the participating small counties have been able to enhance their in-house technology by obtaining additional hardware/software and training capacity.

In addition, the statutes mandate the Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations (LCIR) to conduct annual reviews of the program's effectiveness and report its findings to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Office of the Comptroller by January 15 of each year.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

CS/HB 1343 transfers the oversight of the Small County Technical Assistance Program (program) from the Office of the Comptroller to the Commissioner of Agriculture (Commissioner).

In addition, the bill requires providers bidding on the program contract to be a nonprofit 501c(3) foundation with a governing board having representation of county commissioners and professional staff of the county. Providers must have substantial, documented experience working closely with and providing educational and technical assistance to county governments. The bill also expands the areas of assistance provided under the program contract to include economic and community development.

The bill provides that requests for proposals be required no more frequently than every third year. In addition, all contracts in existence on the effective date of this legislation between the Comptroller and other parties regarding the program will be accepted by the Commissioner and shall remain in force and effect according to its terms.

The bill relieves the Legislative Committee on Intergovernmental Relations of their duties regarding oversight and conducting annual performance reviews of the program. The Commissioner becomes responsible for conducting the performance reviews as necessary to ensure that the goals and objectives of the program are being met.

And lastly, the bill repeals Specific Appropriation 2252 in the 2002-03 General Appropriations Act, and an identical amount is appropriated to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services from the General Revenue Fund for the purpose of program funding.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Please see Section C., Effect of Proposed Changes.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

This bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenue in the aggregate.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill does not reduce any state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

None

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

N/A

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER AFFAIRS:

Prepared by:

Staff Director:

Debbi Kaiser

Susan D. Reese

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AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON FISCAL POLICY AND RESOURCES:

Prepared by:

Staff Director:

Kama Monroe

Lynne Overton

AS FURTHER REVISED BY THE COUNCIL FOR COMPETITIVE COMMERCE:

Prepared by:

Council Director:

Debbi Kaiser

Matthew Carter