

STORAGE NAME: h0577s1a.in.doc
DATE: January 8, 2002

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON
INSURANCE
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: CS/HB 577

RELATING TO: Governmental Reorganization

SPONSOR(S): Committee on Banking; Representatives Flanagan, Waters, Alexander and Brummer

TIED BILL(S):

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

- (1) BANKING YEAS 7 NAYS 0
 - (2) INSURANCE YEAS 13 NAYS 0
 - (3) STATE ADMINISTRATION
 - (4) FISCAL POLICY COUNCIL
 - (5) COMPETITIVE COMMERCE COUNCIL
-

I. SUMMARY:

In November 1998, voters approved Constitutional Revision 8 that restructures the Cabinet. The revision establishes a new Cabinet post of Chief Financial Officer and abolishes the offices of Treasurer and Comptroller. These changes apply to the November 2002, General Election and take effect January 7, 2003. To implement Constitutional Revision 8, CS/HB 577 will:

- Create the Office of Chief Financial Officer. In addition to the duties specified by the constitution, the Chief Financial Officer will administer the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan and the Florida Security for Public Deposits Act; and carry out laws relating to unclaimed property.
- Create a new Department of Insurance and Financial Services. The new department will replace the regulatory duties of the current Department of Insurance and Department of Banking and Finance. The Governor and Cabinet will serve as the head of the new department, with responsibility for all rulemaking. Administration and personnel will be under an Executive Director appointed by the Governor and Cabinet, subject to Senate confirmation. The functional regulation of insurance and financial services entities will be under the direction of commissioners appointed by the Executive Director, subject to approval of the Governor and Cabinet. The Commissioner of Insurance will be responsible for regulation of insurance and will serve as State Fire Marshal. The Commissioner of Financial Services will be responsible for regulation of banks, credit unions, other financial institutions, finance companies, funeral and cemetery services, and the securities industry. Each commissioner will have authority to take "final agency action" for purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act.
- Transfer the functions relating to the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

This bill appropriates \$227,984 to fund the Office of Transition Management for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

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:

Constitutional Revision 8

In the 1998 General Election, Florida voters approved Constitutional Revision 8 to the Florida Constitution. Constitutional Revision 8 creates the Cabinet post of Chief Financial Officer and abolishes the offices of Treasurer and Comptroller. The Secretary of State and the Commissioner of Education likewise are eliminated from the Cabinet. As a result, the Cabinet is reduced from seven to four members, consisting of the Governor, the Chief Financial Officer, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Agriculture. In addition, the membership of the State Board of Administration is changed to the Governor, Chief Financial Officer, and Attorney General, rather than the Governor, Comptroller, and Treasurer. These changes apply to the November 2002 General Election and take effect January 7, 2003.

Constitutional Revision 8 does not address the organizational alignment of the regulatory functions assigned to the Treasurer and the Comptroller by statute.

Treasurer / Department Of Insurance

Constitutional Duties

The Treasurer is an elected position created by the state constitution as part of the Cabinet. The constitutional duties of the Treasurer, under Article IV, section 4, Florida Constitution, are to "keep all state funds and securities." The Treasurer is also a member of the State Board of Administration.

Statutory Duties

The Treasurer is designated by statute to be the head of the Department of Insurance and also is known as the Insurance Commissioner. The Department of Insurance regulates all aspects of insurance in Florida, as well as investigating insurance fraud and violations of the Insurance Code. Statutory duties of the Treasurer include investing the state's general revenue fund and trust funds, administering the Florida Security for Public Deposits Act and the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan, and serving as State Fire Marshal, whose primary duties are to minimize the loss of life and property in this state due to fire.

Organization of the Department of Insurance

The Department of Insurance is divided into 10 divisions. These divisions are:

- *Administration*, which performs facilities management, personnel management, training, and purchasing;
- *Agents and Agency Services*, which is responsible for licensing, regulating, and investigating the professional activities of insurance agents;
- *Insurance Consumer Services*, which handles all consumer inquiries and complaints, provides educational materials, and maintains a toll-free hotline for consumers;
- *Insurance Fraud*, which investigates all forms of insurance fraud;
- *Insurer Services*, which regulates insurance companies by monitoring the financial condition and regulatory compliance of insurance companies and approves insurance rates and forms;
- *Legal Services*, which represents the Department of Insurance in administrative hearings and court proceedings and provides legal opinions to the public and the Department of Insurance;
- *Rehabilitation and Liquidation*, which oversees financially unstable insurance companies;
- *Risk Management*, which administers the state's property and casualty self-insurance funds;
- *State Fire Marshal*, which investigates fires and suppresses arson, inspects state owned and leased buildings, enforces laws governing explosives, fireworks, fire suppression equipment, and sprinkler systems, establishes standards for firefighters, licenses and permits fire equipment dealers, and operates the Fire College; and
- *Treasury*, which carries out the constitutional duties of the treasurer and oversees the State Employees Deferred Compensation Plan.

Staffing and Funding

The Department of Insurance has 1,486.5 full-time positions and an annual operating budget of \$118.0 million for FY 2001-02. The activities of the Department of Insurance are funded through four operating trust funds: Treasurer's Administrative and Investment Trust Fund, Florida Risk Management Trust Fund, Agents and Solicitors County Tax Trust Fund, and Insurance Commissioner's Regulatory Trust Fund.

Field Offices

The Department of Insurance maintains seventeen field offices that are located in Bartow, Daytona, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Ft. Walton Beach, Jacksonville, Lake City, Largo, Marianna, Miami, Ocala, Orlando, Pensacola, Plantation, Quincy, Tampa, and West Palm Beach.

Comptroller / Department of Banking and Finance

Constitutional Duties

The Comptroller is an elected position created by the state constitution as part of the Cabinet. The constitutional duties of the Comptroller, under Article IV, section 4, Florida Constitution, are to serve as chief financial officer of the state and to settle and approve all accounts against the state. The Comptroller also is a member of the State Board of Administration.

Statutory Duties

The statutory duties of the Comptroller include examining, auditing, and settling claims and demands against the state, and serving as the head of the Department of Banking and Finance, which is responsible for regulating financial institutions and securities-related businesses, providing consumer financial protections, and administering the Unclaimed Property Act.

Organization of the Department of Banking and Finance

The Comptroller is charged with executing the programs and policies adopted by the Legislature. The Department of Banking and Finance is one of six departments not required to comply with the specific organizational units applicable to departments generally. The functions of the Department of Banking and Finance have been organized into the following divisions:

- *Accounting and Auditing*, which provides financial accountability for public funds;
- *Banking*, which regulates state-chartered financial institutions;
- *Financial Investigations*, which examines consumer complaints, investigates allegations or suspected wrongdoing, and educates consumers.
- *Information Services*, which maintains the Florida Accounting Information Resource and the regulatory and licensing programs within the department; and
- *Securities and Finance*, which regulates the securities industry and the financial industry.

The Comptroller also oversees the Office of Unclaimed Property, which receives, accounts for, and disperses tangible and intangible property from unclaimed savings and checking accounts, money orders, travelers' checks, uncashed payroll or cashier's checks, stocks, bonds, other securities, insurance policy proceeds, refunds, security and utility deposits, and contents of safety deposit boxes.

Staffing and Funding

The Department of Banking and Finance has 900 full-time equivalent positions and an annual operating budget of \$70.6 million for FY 2001-02. Fifty-five percent of the operating budget of the Department of Banking and Finance is from the General Revenue Fund, with the remainder from the following eight trust funds: Administrative Trust Fund, Working Capital Trust Fund, Consolidated Payment Trust Fund, Regulatory Trust Fund, Financial Institutions Regulatory Trust Fund, Anti-Fraud Trust Fund, Federal Use of State Lands Trust Fund, and Comptroller's Federal Equitable Sharing Trust Fund.

Regional/Field Offices

The Department of Banking and Finance maintains eight regional offices. These offices are located in Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Pensacola, Tampa, and West Palm Beach.

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

The Department of Law Enforcement is created under s. 20.201, F.S. The head of the department is the Governor and Cabinet. The Governor, with the approval of three members of the Cabinet, appoints an executive director subject to confirmation by the Senate. The Criminal Justice Investigations and Forensic Science Program, under the supervision of the department, may investigate violations of criminal laws, and has the authority to bear arms, make arrests, and serve and execute search warrants and arrest warrants.¹

The Department of Law Enforcement has 1,814 full-time employees and an annual operating budget of \$251.5 million for fiscal year 2001-2002. Approximately 40 percent of the operating budget of the department is funded through general revenue funds. The remaining 60 percent is funded by federal funds and trust funds.

Merging Departments — Type Two Transfer

Under a type two transfer, which is defined in s. 20.06, F.S., an agency, department, program, activity, function, unit, or subunit is merged into another agency or department. The merging agency or department retains all its statutory powers, duties, and functions. Its records, personnel, property and balance of appropriations, allocations, or other funds are transferred to the agency with which it is merged. The administrative rules that were in effect before the transfer remain in effect.

C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

To implement Constitutional Revision 8, CS/HB 577 will:

- Create the Office of Chief Financial Officer. In addition to the duties specified by the Constitution, the Chief Financial Officer will administer the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan and the Florida Security for Public Deposits Act; and carry out laws relating to unclaimed property.
- Create a new Department of Insurance and Financial Services. The new department will replace the regulatory duties of the current Department of Insurance and Department of Banking and Finance. The Governor and Cabinet will serve as the head of the new department, with responsibility for all rulemaking. Administration and personnel will be under an Executive Director appointed by the Governor and Cabinet, subject to Senate confirmation. The functional regulation of insurance and financial services entities will be under the direction of commissioners appointed by the Executive Director, subject to approval of the Governor and Cabinet. The Commissioner of Insurance will be responsible for regulation of insurance and will operate as the state Fire Marshal. The Commissioner of Financial Services will be responsible for regulation of banks, credit unions, other financial institutions, finance companies, funeral and cemetery services, and the securities industry. Each commissioner will have authority to take "final agency action" for purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act.

¹ Section 943.04, F.S.

- Transfer the powers, duties, personnel, property, and funds of the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance to the Department of Law Enforcement.

Effective July 1, 2002, the Office of Transition Management is created to implement the logistics of the relevant cabinet restructuring and integrating the regulatory functions of the combining agencies, as well as the functional transfers. On that date, the office of the executive director of the Department of Insurance and Financial Services is established. By no later than August 1, 2002, an executive director will be appointed by the Governor and the Cabinet, subject to Senate confirmation, who also will serve as the head of the Office of Transitional Management until January 7, 2003, the date the new department is created.

The bill provides an appropriation of \$227,984 from the Grants and Donations Trust Fund in the Executive Office of the Governor (funded by \$113,992 from the Administrative Trust Fund of the Department of Banking and Finance, and \$113,992 from the Insurance Commissioner's Regulatory Trust Fund of the Department of Insurance) to fund two full time equivalent positions to run the transitional office. If funding for the Office of Transition Management is provided in the 2002-2003 General Appropriations Act, this appropriation shall not take effect.

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Section 1 Amends s. 20.04(3), F.S., relating to structure of the Executive Branch. Effective January 7, 2003, the Department of Insurance and Financial Services would be exempt from the requirement that departments be organized into divisions, bureaus, and sections. Currently, this provision exempts the Department of Banking and Finance, as well as the Department of Children and Family Services; the Department of Corrections; the Department of Management Services; the Department of Revenue; and the Department of Transportation.

Section 2 Creates s. 20.121, F. S., establishing the Office of Chief Financial Officer, effective January 7, 2003. The head of the office is the elected Chief Financial Officer, and the duties of the office are as specified in the State Constitution (i.e., to serve as chief fiscal officer of the state, to settle and approve accounts against the state, and to keep all state funds and securities).

This section also provides that the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for unclaimed property (currently under the Comptroller), security for public deposits (currently under the Treasurer), and the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan (currently under the Treasurer).

This section also creates the Division of Financial Investigations within the Office of Chief Financial Officer, which functions as a criminal justice agency within the meaning of s. 943.045(10)(e), F.S., and shall have a separate budget (a prerequisite for the state agency to share federal assistance for certain law enforcement activities).

Section 3 Creates s. 20.131, F. S., establishing the Department of Insurance and Financial Services and specifying that the head of the department is the Governor and Cabinet. The other provisions of this section are as follows:

Executive Director—Provides that the chief administrator of the department is the Executive Director, appointed by the Governor and Cabinet, subject to Senate confirmation, who serves at the pleasure of the Governor and Cabinet. The functions of the Executive Director are limited to personnel, administrative, and budgetary matters (including administrative coordination of issues that affect more than one commissioner and coordination of legislative activities).

Departmental Structure—The regulatory functions of the department are divided into two “offices” headed by “commissioners.” For purposes of adopting final orders under the Administrative Procedure Act, each commissioner is the “agency head” and is responsible for taking final agency action.

The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance is responsible for all insurance regulation activities and state government risk management, as well as functioning as the State Fire Marshall.

The Office of the Commissioner of Financial Services handles regulatory functions relating to banks, credit unions, other financial institutions, finance companies, funeral and cemetery services, and securities. The Commissioner of Financial Services is given subpoena powers, is authorized to demand sworn statements, and is authorized to petition a circuit court to enforce compliance thereto. These authorizations of power mirror those currently granted to the Comptroller pursuant to s. 17.05, F.S.

The Office of the Commissioner of Financial Services shall include a Division of Investigations and Enforcement, headed by a director who is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Commissioner of Financial Services. The Division of Investigations and Enforcement functions as a criminal justice agency and may conduct investigations within or outside the state to enforce this section. The division has a separate budget.

Commissioners—Each commissioner is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the Executive Director, but appointment is subject to the approval of the Governor and Cabinet.

The minimum qualification for the Commissioner of Insurance is 5 years of responsible private sector experience (within the preceding 10 years) working full time in an area under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, or as a senior examiner or other senior employee of an insurance regulatory agency.

The minimum qualification for Commissioner of Financial Services is 5 years of responsible private sector experience (within the preceding 10 years) working full time in an area under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Office of the Commissioner of Financial Services, or as a senior examiner or other senior employee of a state or federal agency having regulatory responsibility over financial institutions, finance companies, or securities companies.

Section 4 Effective January 7, 2003, provides for transfers of various powers, duties, functions, rules, records, personnel, property, and funds from the current Department of Banking and Finance and the Department of Insurance to the Office of Chief Financial Officer, the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services, and the Department of Law Enforcement.

Office of Chief Financial Officer—Powers, duties, personnel, property, and funds relating to constitutional duties of the Comptroller and the Treasurer, unclaimed property, the Florida Security for Public Deposits Act, and the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan are transferred to the Office of Chief Financial Officer.

Department of Law Enforcement—Powers, duties, personnel, property, and funds of the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance are transferred to the Department of Law Enforcement. The Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance has 167 full-time employees and an operating budget \$10.9 million for fiscal year 2001-2002.

Department of Insurance and Financial Services—All remaining powers, duties, functions, personnel and funds of the Department of Banking and Finance and the Department of Insurance are transferred to the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services.

Section 5 Provides that rules relating to the functions of the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance in effect on January 6, 2003, shall become rules of the Department of Law Enforcement. With the exception for rules relating to constitutional powers and duties, unclaimed property, security for public deposits, the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan, which become rules of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, remaining rules of the Department of Banking and Finance and the Department of Insurance that were in effect on January 6, 2003, shall become rules of the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services on January 7, 2003.

Section 6 Preserves judicial and administrative actions involving the Department of Banking and Finance and the Department of Insurance pending on January 7, 2003, and substitutes the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services or the Chief Financial Officer as a party, where appropriate. If the action involves the Division of Insurance Fraud, the Department of Law Enforcement instead shall be substituted as the party in interest.

Section 7 Creates the Office of Transition Management to manage the transitions to the new Office of Chief Financial Officer and Department of Insurance and Financial Services.

Appointment of Executive Director—The Governor and Cabinet are required to appoint an Executive Director of the Department of Insurance and Financial Services by no later than August 1, 2002. Until the creation of the new department takes effect January 7, 2003, the Executive Director serves as head of the Office of Transition Management.

Office of Transition Management—The Office of Transition Management is established as an independent office housed within the Executive Office of the Governor. The purpose is to manage the transition to the new Office of Chief Financial Officer and Department of Insurance and Financial Services, including:

Assuring that the employees of the offices of Commissioner of Insurance and Commissioner of Financial Services, including all senior management positions, are occupied by qualified personnel by January 7, 2003.

Submitting written recommendations to the Legislature for statutory changes by February 1, 2003. This submission must include recommendations regarding streamlined rulemaking procedures and procedures to allow adoption of emergency rules without action of the Governor and Cabinet.

Providing a report that specifies which positions are attached to Chief Financial Officer functions and which positions are attached to insurance or financial services regulatory functions.

Taking action in advance on personnel, purchasing, and administrative matters.
Submitting to the Governor and Cabinet a proposed organizational plan for the new department.

Providing monthly status reports and other information, as requested by the Legislature.

Cooperation—The existing Department of Insurance and Department of Banking and Finance and the Offices of Treasurer and Comptroller are required to cooperate with the Office of Transition Management and provide any requested information.

Funding—Funding for the Office of Transition Management is specified unless provided in the General Appropriations Act.

Section 8 Requires the Division of Statutory Revision to conform the references affected by the passage of this Act and includes those in the text of the 2003 Florida Statutes. Note: This section acts as a “placeholder” for specific amendments to the statutes to be presented as a conforming amendment.

Section 9 Repeals, effective January 7, 2003, s. 20.12, F.S., relating to creation of the Department of Banking and Finance, and s. 20.13, F.S., relating to creation of the Department of Insurance.

Section 10 Provides an appropriation in the amount of \$227,984 to fund the activities of the Office of Transition Management within the Executive Office of the Governor. The source of the appropriation is transfers of equal amounts of \$113,992 from the Administrative Trust Fund of the Department of Banking and Finance and the Insurance Commissioner’s Regulatory Trust Fund of the Department of Insurance. If funding for the Office of Transition Management is provided in the 2002-2003 General Appropriations Act, this appropriation shall not take effect.

Section 11 Provides that the bill will take effect upon becoming a law, except as otherwise provided.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None

2. Expenditures:

Non-recurring

	<u>FY2002-03</u>	<u>FY2003-04</u>
Insurance Commissioner’s Regulatory Trust Fund	\$4,582	N/A
Financial Institutions Trust Fund	<u>\$4,582</u>	N/A
Total non-recurring	\$9,164	

Recurring

Insurance Commissioner’s Regulatory Trust Fund	\$109,410	\$112,145
Financial Institutions Trust Fund	<u>\$109,410</u>	<u>\$112,145</u>
Total recurring	\$218,820	\$224,290

See III.D., Fiscal Comments, for type of expenses and assumptions used.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None

2. Expenditures:

None

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The fiscal impact estimates for state government were derived from last year's fiscal analysis of CS/CS/HB 681, which is substantially similar to CS/HB 577. Committee on Banking staff contacted estimating authorities and is waiting for estimates that may change the analysis above as a result of the functional transfer to the Department of Law Enforcement, given the fact that the budget of the Department of Insurance relies primarily on trust funds, and the investigative functions of the Department of Law Enforcement are largely funded from General Revenue.

Those anticipated estimates notwithstanding, fiscal comments from CS/CS/HB 681, with corrected Fiscal Year dates, are as follows:

[This bill] creates an Office of Transition Management to manage the transition to the new department. This involves hiring an Executive Director to direct the transition. The duties of the Executive Director will include developing a proposed organizational plan for the new department, preparing an analysis of staffing needs on a position-by-position basis, assuring all senior management positions are occupied no later than January 7, 2003, and submitting written recommendations to the Legislature for any additional statutory changes needed to ensure a smooth transition. In addition to salaries and benefits for the Executive Director and one support staff person, expenses will include office space and office equipment such as telephones, personal computers, supplies, file cabinets and a facsimile machine. In calculating the fiscal impact, staff used the standard expense and operating capital outlay package developed by the Office of Planning and Budgeting in conjunction with the Department of Management Services, and an average annual salary of \$113,000 for current department secretaries of executive branch departments and \$40,000 as mid-range salary for an Administrative Assistant III. Added to both of these salary amounts is a sum equal to 35 percent of salary for benefits. Recurring expenditures for FY 2003-04 reflect a 2.5 percent increase over FY 2002-03 expenditures.

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 an 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 the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

None identified.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

Rules that relate to the functions of the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance in effect on January 6, 2003, shall become rules of the Department of Law Enforcement. With the exception for rules relating to constitutional powers and duties, unclaimed property, security for public deposits, and the Government Employees Deferred Compensation Plan, which become rules of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, remaining rules of the Department of Banking and Finance or of the Department of Insurance that were in effect on January 6, 2003, shall become rules of the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services on January 7, 2003.

C. OTHER COMMENTS:

This bill conceptually is similar to the Cabinet re-organization bills filed in 2000 (HB 739) and is similar substantially to HB 681 filed in 2001. One notable exception in the present bill includes reducing the number of regulatory commissioners from three to two. HB 681 from the 2001 session established the Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Financial Services, and Commissioner of Securities. CS/HB 577 establishes offices for the first two only. Another difference is the functional transfer of the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance to the Department of Law Enforcement.

In 1998, House Speaker Webster asked House committees to examine state agency functions to identify candidates for realignment or functional transfers. The Committee on Financial Services identified the Division of Insurance Fraud of the Department of Insurance as a possible candidate for transfer to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement because the duties of the Division of Insurance Fraud include criminal investigations of various types of insurance fraud and violations of the unfair insurance trade practices law (which are second degree misdemeanors only by virtue of the general criminal penalty for violations of the Insurance Code).

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

On December 18, 2001, the Committee on Banking adopted four amendments and unanimously passed the bill, as amended, as a committee substitute. The committee substitute removed a proposed transfer of the State Fire Marshal to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The committee substitute provides that the Insurance Commissioner will remain the State Fire Marshal, and all functional issues related to that position would transfer to the new Department of Insurance and Financial Services.

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE:

Prepared by:

Michael A. Kliner

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