

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice

BILL: SB 164

INTRODUCER: Senators Evers and Grimsley

SUBJECT: Crime Stoppers Trust Fund

DATE: April 7, 2015

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Sumner</u>	<u>Cannon</u>	<u>CJ</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Wagoner</u>	<u>Yeatman</u>	<u>CA</u>	Favorable
3.	<u>Clodfelter</u>	<u>Sadberry</u>	<u>ACJ</u>	Favorable
4.	_____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 164 authorizes counties that are awarded a grant from the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund to use the funds for the purchase and distribution of promotional items to increase public awareness and educate the public about Crime Stoppers.

The express authorization to use grant funds for certain expenditures does not have a fiscal impact.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2015.

II. Present Situation:

Section 16.555, F.S., provides a funding mechanism for Crime Stopper programs. The Department of Legal Affairs is required to make applications for all federal and state or private grants which meet the purposes of advancing Crime Stoppers in the state; establish a trust fund to administer grants to fund Crime Stoppers and its crime fighting programs within the units of local government; and administer and disburse the funds.

In 1998, the Legislature added a funding source in s. 938.06, F.S., by imposing a \$20 court cost on persons convicted of any criminal offense.¹ The proceeds from the \$20 court cost are deposited in a separate account within the trust fund. The clerks retain \$3 per assessment as a service charge and forward the money to the Department of Revenue for deposit in the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund. The funds are to be designated according to the judicial circuit where it was collected. However, grants may be awarded only to counties which are served by an official

¹ Ch. 98-319, L.O.F.

member of the Florida Association of Crime Stoppers. Approximately \$4.4 million in grants were awarded to the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund during Fiscal Year 2013-2014.²

Crime Stoppers began in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1976. A homicide detective with the Albuquerque Police asked a local television station to broadcast a re-enactment of an unsolved murder on its newscast. A reward was offered and a caller contacted the police the next day with a tip that led the police to the two men who were responsible. The success of this concept launched a program which is now internationally known as "Crime Stoppers." There are now over 1,200 Crime Stoppers programs worldwide.³

The Central Florida Crime Watch Program, now Central Florida Crimeline, was formed one year after the first Crime Stoppers program. Today there are 32 programs in Florida operating under the name Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, Inc.⁴ Florida Crime Stoppers programs reported 56,069 crime tips, 9,857 cleared cases, 4,679 arrests, and 3,885 approved rewards for tipsters during Fiscal Year 2013-2014.⁵

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill amends s. 16.555, F.S., to authorize counties that are awarded a grant from the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund to use the funds for the purchase and distribution of promotional items to increase public awareness and educate the public about Crime Stoppers.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2015.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

The bill would allow for trust funds to be used to purchase and distribute promotional items.

² Department of Legal Affairs, *Division of Victim Services and Criminal Justice Programs Annual Report 2013-2014*, pg. 11, available at [http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/RMAS-9S3LLL/\\$file/2013-2014AnnualReport.pdf](http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/RMAS-9S3LLL/$file/2013-2014AnnualReport.pdf) (last visited March 26, 2015).

³ Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, *Where It All Started*, <http://www.floridacrimestoppers.com/pages/where> (last visited March 24, 2015).

⁴ Florida Association of Crime Stoppers, *Who We Are*, <http://www.floridacrimestoppers.com/pages/who> (last visited March 24, 2015).

⁵ *Division of Victim Services and Criminal Justice Programs Annual Report 2013-2014*, pg. 10.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

SB 164 expressly authorizes the use of grant funds from the Crime Stoppers Trust Fund for certain expenditures. This bill has no fiscal impact.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

It is possible that the bill could be interpreted to limit use of grant funds to the purchase and distribution of promotional items. It is recommended that the bill be amended to remove any ambiguity.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 16.555 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.