

## CHAPTER 97-15

### House Bill No. 399

An act relating to coordinated business reporting; providing legislative findings and intent; creating the “Florida Business Coordination Act”; providing definitions; requiring the Department of State to create a master business index for certain purposes; designating the Secretary of State as the custodian of the index; providing duties of the department; requiring the Secretary of State to conduct a study and develop legislation for certain purposes; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Legislative findings and intent.—

(1) The Legislature finds that:

(a) As documented by the Governor’s Single Business Identifier Intera-  
gency Task Force, state government places a heavy burden on the business  
community of this state through the requirement to obtain and maintain  
numerous licenses, permits, and registrations.

(b) While such requirements are necessary to ensure the public safety  
and welfare, present methods for the business community to meet such  
obligations, as prescribed by law and administered and enforced by state  
agencies, are cumbersome and place an undue hardship on business entities  
in this state.

(c) The potential exists for the state to more easily identify and eliminate  
duplicative or outdated licensing requirements and thereby reduce its cost  
of operation without jeopardizing the public safety or welfare.

(2) It is the intent of this act to establish a master business index within  
the Department of State and to facilitate a reporting mechanism which  
consolidates and coordinates business entity licensing and reporting re-  
quirements whenever possible.

Section 2. Short title.—This act may be cited as the “Florida Business  
Coordination Act.”

Section 3. Definitions.—As used in this act:

(1) “Business entity” means any form of corporation, partnership, associ-  
ation, cooperative, joint venture, business trust, or sole proprietorship that  
conducts business in this state.

(2) “Department” means the Department of State.

(3) “Master business index” means that database maintained by the de-  
partment which indexes all business entity records maintained by any state  
government agency.

(4) "Single business identifier" means the unique record number assigned to a business entity by the department in compliance with the provisions of this act.

(5) "State agency" means any state government agency, department, or commission which has jurisdiction over business entities.

Section 4. Single business identifier.—

(1) The department shall create a master business index, using as an initial base the commercial regulation and registration program databases the department currently maintains. Each business entity shall be assigned a unique single business identifier for interagency use.

(2) The department is authorized to take the actions it deems necessary to integrate all non-business entity or commercial registrations it maintains into the Master Business Index such that all registrations maintained for a business entity are reflected in the index in a consolidated manner.

(3) The department is authorized to take the actions it deems practical to consolidate its various renewal or annual mailings, to include the altering of specified mailing dates and filing deadlines.

Section 5. Custodian.—The Secretary of State is hereby designated the custodian of the Master Business Index.

Section 6. (1) The Secretary of State shall conduct a study of the technical feasibility of implementing a uniform business report for use throughout selected state agencies in the consolidated licensing, registration or renewal of business entity filings in this state. Additionally, the study shall address the technical feasibility of each state agency that registers or licenses business entities and maintains license records on such entities to:

(a) Include the Single Business Identifier, assigned by the Department of State and maintained in the Master Business Index, in its records such that registration or license information may be directly retrieved by use of the Single Business Identifier number.

(b) Coordinate its data records creation with the Department of State so as to obtain a Single Business Identifier for all records it maintains or creates.

(2) Based on the study, the Secretary of State shall develop legislative proposals for submission prior to the 1998 Regular Legislative Session, which implement the intent of this act.

Section 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor April 21, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 21, 1997.