

CHAPTER 97-17

House Bill No. 253

An act relating to ad valorem tax administration; amending s. 197.222, F.S.; providing that the tax collector may accept a late payment of the first installment of ad valorem taxes prepaid by the installment method; providing a penalty; providing for distribution of penalty revenue; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and subsection (4) of section 197.222, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, as amended by chapter 96-288, Laws of Florida, are amended to read:

197.222 Prepayment of estimated tax by installment method.—

(1) Ad valorem taxes on any real property with more than \$100 of estimated taxes due may be prepaid in installments as provided in this section. A taxpayer who elects to prepay taxes shall make payments based upon an estimated tax equal to the actual taxes levied upon the subject property in the prior year. Such taxpayer shall complete and file an application for each parcel to prepay such taxes by installment with the tax collector prior to May 1 of the year in which the taxpayer elects to prepay taxes in installments pursuant to this section. The application shall be made on forms supplied by the department and provided to the taxpayer by the tax collector. After submission of an initial application, a taxpayer shall not be required to submit additional annual applications as long as he or she continues to elect to prepay taxes in installments pursuant to this section. However, if in any year the taxpayer does not so elect, reapplication shall be required for a subsequent election to do so. Installment payments shall be made according to the following schedule:

(a) The first payment of one-quarter of the total amount of estimated taxes due shall be made not later than June 30 of the year in which the taxes are assessed. A 6-percent discount applied against the amount of the installment shall be granted for such payment. The tax collector may accept a late payment of the first installment under this paragraph within 30 days after June 30; such late payment must be accompanied by a penalty of 5 percent of the amount of the installment due.

(4) The moneys collected under this section shall be placed in an interest-earning escrow account. The taxes and penalties collected shall be distributed as provided in s. 197.383. The interest earned on this account shall be distributed as provided in s. 197.383 or, at the option of the tax collector, as provided in s. 219.075(2).

Section 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 1998.

Became a law without the Governor's approval April 22, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 21, 1997.