

House Bill No. 47

An act relating to community service; creating the Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001; providing legislative intent; authorizing the Executive Office of the Governor to establish policies and procedures which provide for the expenditure of funds to develop and facilitate initiatives that encourage and reward volunteerism; providing purposes of the act; amending s. 14.29, F.S.; expanding the purposes of a required report of the Florida Commission on Community Service; authorizing the commission to provide specified assistance for the establishment and implementation of programs pursuant to the Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001.—

(1) This act may be cited as the “Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001.”

(2) It is the intent of the Legislature to promote the development of better communities by fostering greater civic responsibility through volunteerism and service to the community. Toward this end, the Executive Office of the Governor may establish policies and procedures which provide for the expenditure of funds to develop and facilitate initiatives by public agencies, scholastic institutions, private institutions, and individuals that establish and implement programs that encourage and reward volunteerism.

(3) Initiatives and programs developed pursuant to this act shall have the following purposes and objectives:

(a) To place increased priority on citizen participation and volunteerism as a means of addressing the increasingly complex problems facing Florida’s communities.

(b) To encourage local community leaders to implement strategies that expand civic participation based on the fact that volunteers represent a valuable and much-needed asset within communities.

(c) To promote the concept and practice of corporate citizenship, particularly in communities where such initiatives are less developed.

(d) To build the enthusiasm, dedication, and combined expertise of individual citizens and public and private systems to find new and creative ways to effectively use volunteerism and community service as a strategy to meet the challenges facing Florida’s communities both now and in the future.

(e) To foster the alignment of community volunteer resources with the goals of the state.

(f) To implement policy and administrative changes that encourage and enable individuals to participate in volunteer and community service activities.

(g) To encourage nonprofit agencies to interweave volunteers into the fabric of their service delivery as a means of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of their services.

(h) To support and promote volunteer service to all citizens as an effective means to address community needs and foster a collective commitment to lifelong community service.

(i) To recognize National Volunteer Week as a time to encourage all citizens of Florida to participate in local service projects.

(j) To recognize the value of individual volunteers and volunteer and service organizations and programs and to honor and celebrate the success of volunteers.

(k) To encourage volunteer and service efforts to point children in the right direction and to endow them with the character and competence they need to achieve success in life. In order to accomplish this, the citizens of Florida are encouraged to support America's Promise, the Alliance for Youth, and Florida's Promise for Youth through volunteerism and citizen service, to help ensure that children in Florida have the following five fundamental resources in their lives:

1. An ongoing relationship with a caring adult.
2. Safe places with structured activities during after-school hours.
3. A healthy start.
4. A marketable skill through effective education.
5. An opportunity to give back through community service.

Section 2. Paragraph (c) of subsection (7) and paragraph (c) of subsection (8) of section 14.29, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

14.29 Florida Commission on Community Service.—

(7) The commission shall:

(c) Prepare an annual report detailing its activities during the preceding year and, to the extent possible, compile and synthesize any reports that it accepted on behalf of the Governor. The commission's report shall be presented to the Governor no later than January 15, with copies to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report shall also include specific recommendations for any necessary legislative, administrative, or regulatory reform, and the commission's assessment of the state of volunteerism in Florida.

(8) The commission may:

(c) Apply for and accept funds, grants, gifts, and services from local, state, or federal government, or from any of their agencies, or any other public or private source and is authorized to use funds derived from these sources to defray administrative costs, and implement programs as may be necessary to carry out the commission's charge, and assist agencies, institutions, and individuals in the implementation of programs pursuant to the Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001. The commission may also authorize Volunteer Florida, Inc., the commission's nonprofit direct-support organization, to assist in securing training, technical assistance, and other support needed to accomplish the intent and purposes of the Florida Volunteer and Community Service Act of 2001.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor May 30, 2001.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 30, 2001.