

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Date: January 6, 1998 Revised: _____

Subject: Universities/Tuition/Credit Cards

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	<u>White</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>GO</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>WM</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This committee substitute would authorize state universities to allow students to pay tuition and fees by credit card without charging them a fee.

It would make retroactive to May 5, 1997, an exemption from fees for adopted children who attend state universities, community colleges, or technical centers.

This bill amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 239.117, 240.235, 240.35, and 240.289.

II. Present Situation:

Section 215.322, F.S., regulates the use of credit cards for services provided by state agencies. It requires a state agency to pass on to the card owner any surcharge required by the credit card company for its use.

Section 240.289, F.S., authorizes state universities to enter into agreements to accept payment by credit card for goods, services, tuition, and fees. It requires the payment to be "pursuant to s. 215.322," F.S.

Sections 239.117, 240.235, and 240.35, F.S., govern student fees and exemptions from fees at school district technical centers, community colleges, and state universities. Students who are in foster care without a plan of being reunited with their parents are exempt from all such fees. The 1997 Legislature amended those sections to provide an exemption from fees for students who were adopted from the Department of Children and Families. These exemptions are available only to people who were adopted after December 31, 1997.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The proposed legislation would amend s. 240.289, F.S., to authorize the universities to allow students to use credit cards to pay tuition without charging them for that privilege. This change would allow the university to incur a fee for allowing the student to use the card, as credit card companies do not allow them to surcharge the student. The provisions apply also to charge cards and debit cards.

The bill would also change the date by which adopted children could qualify for an exemption from fees for their attendance at public postsecondary education institutions. Any child adopted after May 5, 1997, would become eligible for the exemptions.

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Students at the 10 state universities could charge their tuition, nonresident tuition, and fees to their credit cards without paying a surcharge.

Children adopted from the Department of Children and Families between May 6, 1997, and December 31, 1997, would be exempt from fees for their enrollment at any public postsecondary education institution.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The state universities would incur the cost of any surcharge required by credit card companies for students who used credit cards to pay their tuition and fees.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
