

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

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

BILL: CS/SB 1458

SPONSOR: Transportation Committee and Senator Constantine

SUBJECT: Expressway Authorities

DATE: February 27, 2002 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	McAuliffe	Meyer	TR	Favorable/CS
2.	_____	_____	CA	_____
3.	_____	_____	AGG	_____
4.	_____	_____	AP	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This CS amends several sections of Chapter 348, F.S., to update or clarify provisions related to the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA), but the primary changes allow the OOCEA to issue its own revenue bonds. These bonds would be repaid through toll revenues, and would not pledge the full faith and credit of the State of Florida. The CS provides the OOCEA may not construct any new roads or expand any roads into the Wekiva River Protection Area without prior Legislative approval.

This CS substantially amends sections 348.754, 348.7543, 348.7544, 348.7545, 348.755, 348.765 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA) was created by the Legislature in 1963; it's first project, the Beeline Expressway (State Road 528) opened to traffic four years later. Comprising the system are 90 total centerline miles, 11 main-line toll plazas, 42 ramp toll plazas, and 186 total toll lanes. More than 200 million motorists used the toll lanes in fiscal year 2001. The OOCEA has planned a \$1billion program over the next five years including \$758 million in capital improvements.

OOCEA's 2001 Annual Report indicates total system revenues grew from \$125.55 million in 2000 to \$139.6 million in 2001. Forty-one percent of the expressway authority's 2001 revenues were earmarked to pay debt service.

Pursuant to state law, the State Board of Administration's Division of Bond Finance issues bonds for OOCEA's projects on behalf of the authority.

Part II of chapter 369, F.S., defines the Wekiva River Protection Area, the Wekiva River System, and provides protections against impacts of growth within the defined area and associated wetlands and rivers. Section 369.305, F.S., provides that the comprehensive plans and land development regulations of Orange, Lake, and Seminole Counties must contain goals, policies and objectives which result in the protection of the:

- Water quantity, water quality, and hydrology of the Wekiva River System;
- Wetlands associated with the Wekiva River System;
- Aquatic and wetland-dependent wildlife species associated with the Wekiva River System;
- Habitat within the Wekiva River Protection Area; and
- Native vegetation within the Wekiva River Protection Area.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 348.754, F. S., is amended to provide after July 1, 2002, the OOCEA may not approve any acquisition of right-of-way or construction of any new additions, extensions, or appurtenant facilities without prior legislative authorization if the new additions, extensions, or appurtenant facilities are proposed to be located within the Wekiva River Protection Area designated in s. 369.303 (9), F.S.

Sections 348.7543, 348.7544, 348.7545, 348.755, and 348.765, F.S., are amended in various ways to give the OOCEA authority to issue its own bonds. A specific amendment to s. 348.755, F.S., says these bonds “shall not pledge the full faith and credit of the state.” The CS also authorizes the refinancing of the Northwest Beltway Part A and the Western Beltway Part C.

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:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Indeterminate.

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.
