

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.)

Prepared By: Education Committee

BILL: SB 1970

SPONSOR: Senator Posey

SUBJECT: Florida Space Research Institute

DATE: April 21, 2005

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Barrett</u>	<u>Cooper</u>	<u>CM</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Matthews</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	Favorable
3.	_____	_____	<u>EA</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill revises the responsibilities of the Florida Space Research Institute (FSRI) to serve as a multi-university center for space-focused research and technology development.

It also provides for an appropriation of \$10 million from General Revenue to the Department of Education to establish FSRI as a multi-university center for space research and an appropriation of \$1 million from General Revenue to Florida Atlantic University to invest in FSRI's matching grant program.

This bill substantially amends section 331.368 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Florida Space Research Institute

In 1999, the Legislature created the Florida Space Research Institute (FSRI) to develop opportunities for Florida's academic institutions to support space technology programs. FSRI leverages state resources with those of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the military, and industry, to expand and diversify Florida's space-related enterprise. Since 2000, FSRI has operated a joint matching grant program to match NASA grants for space research. FSRI has distributed over \$2 million in matching grants under this program.

FRSI works closely with NASA on space research. For example, FRSI co-manages (with NASA) the Space Life Sciences Laboratory, which is a 100,000 square foot bio-science laboratory. In addition, FSRI assists Florida-based companies and universities with a variety of space-related research projects. FSRI also sponsors a range of workforce initiatives, including

space-oriented instruction for K-12 teachers, and training for future aerospace technicians. State funding for FSRI is provided through the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development. The Senate's proposed budget contains \$800,000 in funding for the Florida Space Research Institute. FSRI's combined annual budget is approximately \$2-\$3 million, including federal grants.

Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Services, Interim Project Report 2005-151

In 2004, the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Services conducted an interim study on the Florida space industry. In pertinent part, the report found that the Florida Space Research Institute was successful in leveraging \$615,000 in state funds to sponsor almost \$2 million in strategic research projects at Florida's universities. The report recommended the creation of a center of excellence for space technology.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Florida Space Research Institute

The bill implements certain recommendations from the interim project study from the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Services. In particular, the bill requires FSRI to submit a plan to the Board of Governors by June 30, 2005, for its operation as a multi-university center for space research and technology development. This provision is designed to enhance FSRI as a research center akin to university-based centers of excellence. In fact, in 2003, FSRI submitted a proposal for a Center of Excellence for Spaceport Technology, Biotechnology, Remote Sensing, and Telecommunications.

The bill also provides that FSRI may leverage annual funding from NASA for grants to Florida academic institutions and industry to use for expanding and diversifying space research and sponsoring education and training projects that support aerospace workforce needs. FSRI has successfully leveraged state funds in the past to produce \$2 million in matching grants from \$615,000 in state funds.

The FSRI board's membership is revised to eliminate a representative from the Florida Space Business Roundtable, which filed for administrative dissolution in 2004.

Embry Riddle Aeronautical University is added to the list of public and private institutions invited to participate in FSRI activities. FSRI has worked with Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in the past and the university is currently using FSRI facilities for space biology research.

The bill eliminates lead university requirements to coordinate research of the institute. Currently, the University of Florida serves this function but also competes with FSRI for federal grants. To ensure the independence of grant approvals to each postsecondary institution, the bill repeals the designation of a lead university.

The bill updates the name of the Space Experiment Research and Processing Laboratory (CERPL) to reflect the new name, the Space Life Sciences Lab. FSRI co-manages this facility at the Kennedy Space Center with NASA.

Finally, the bill requires the FSRI board to encourage participation of Florida's space industry in space exploration and to develop partnerships with NASA to research space exploration.

Appropriations

Effective July 1, 2005, the bill appropriates for fiscal year 2005-2006, \$10 million from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to establish the Florida Space Research Institute as a multi-university center for space research and technology development.

Effective July 1, 2005, \$1 million is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to Florida Atlantic University to invest in the Florida Space Research Institute's matching grant program with NASA.

Effective date

Other than the appropriations, which must occur on July 1, 2005, the act takes effect upon becoming a law.

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:

This bill provides that, effective July 1, 2005, for fiscal year 2005-2006, \$10 million will be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to establish the Florida Space Research Institute as a multi-university center for space research and technology development. This funding request is not currently in the proposed Senate budget.

This bill provides that, effective July 1, 2005, \$1 million will be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to Florida Atlantic University to invest in the Florida Space Research Institute's matching grant program with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. This funding request is not currently in the proposed Senate budget.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

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

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

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