

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: PCB ENUS 12-01 Florida Institute for Nuclear Detection and Security

SPONSOR(S): Energy & Utilities Subcommittee

TIED BILLS: None. **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
Orig. Comm.: Energy & Utilities Subcommittee		Whittier	Collins

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

In 2004, the Legislature created the Florida Institute for Nuclear Detection and Security (FINDS or Institute) within the Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences at the University of Florida (UF or University). FINDS was to serve as a "design-basis center for research, development, testing, and engineering projects that directly address and satisfy critical nuclear detection and security needs facing the state and the nation." The Institute was to be headed by a director who possessed a national reputation in the field of nuclear sciences and was to be appointed by the Dean of the College of Engineering at UF.

The Institute was to solicit and receive state, federal, and private funds for the purpose of conducting research and development in the area of nuclear security technology. UF College of Engineering faculty report that no monies were appropriated nor obtained to fund FINDS and it was staffed by only two faculty members who have since left the University. When funding did not materialize, the Board of Advisors that was intended to manage the institute was not established.

According to UF, although still authorized within the statutes, the Institute is not active, it appears there were no records nor reports that were issued by the Institute, and the research that would have been done by FINDS is being conducted within other areas of the University and is not dependent on the Institute.

The bill repeals the obsolete Institute and its advisory board from the statutes.

There appears to be no fiscal impact on state or local governments.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

In 2004, the Legislature created the Florida Institute for Nuclear Detection and Security (FINDS or Institute) within the Department of Nuclear Engineering and Radiological Sciences at the University of Florida (UF or University).¹ FINDS was to serve as a “design-basis center for research, development, testing, and engineering projects that directly address and satisfy critical nuclear detection and security needs facing the state and the nation.”² The Institute was to be headed by a director who possessed a national reputation in the field of nuclear sciences and was to be appointed by the Dean of the College of Engineering at UF.

Activities of the Institute were to include, but not be limited to:³

- The design and testing of innovative interrogation, detection, and assessment devices for monitoring nuclear material;
- Exploring the development of devices for identification of isotopes and materials in structural, agricultural, and biological systems of various types; and
- Contributing to the education and training of high-quality scientists and engineers in the application of engineering solutions in homeland security, detection, imaging, and interrogation of systems, and nonproliferation policy.

Application areas were to include, but not be limited to:⁴

- Portal monitoring,
- Wide area search and cargo screening applications;
- Structural monitoring for post-tensioned bridges;
- Biological and agricultural monitoring; and
- Development of nonproliferation policies.

The activities of FINDS were to be directed by an eight-member Board of Advisors,⁵ serving two-, three-, and four-year terms.⁶

The Institute was to solicit and receive state, federal, and private funds for the purpose of conducting research and development in the area of nuclear security technology.⁷ UF College of Engineering faculty report that no monies were appropriated nor obtained to fund FINDS and it was staffed by only two faculty members who have since left the University. When funding did not materialize, the Board of Advisors that was intended to manage the Institute was not established.⁸

¹ See s. 1004.63, F.S.

² Section 1004.63(1), F.S.

³ Subsections 1004.63(3), (4), and (5), F.S.

⁴ Section 1004.63(3), F.S.

⁵ According to s. 1004.63(6)(a), F.S., “Members of the board of advisors shall include, but are not limited to, a citizen of the State of Florida with interest in the area of public security; a faculty member from FINDS; a scientist of national reputation in the field of nuclear sciences; a representative of the nuclear energy industry in Florida; a representative of the national nuclear energy industry; a representative of the Federal Government programs in nuclear energy or homeland security; a member of the Florida Senate Committee on Home Defense, Public Security, and Ports or other Senate standing committee of similar jurisdiction; and a member of the Florida House Coordinating Committee on Public Security or other House of Representatives standing committee of similar jurisdiction.”

⁶ Section 1004.63(6), F.S.

⁷ Section 1004.63(2), F.S.

⁸ Conversation with Dr. David P. Norton, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs, College of Engineering, University of Florida, January 20, 2012.

According to UF, although still authorized within the statutes, the Institute is not active, there appear to be no records nor reports that were issued by the Institute, and the research that would have been done by FINDS is being conducted within other areas of the University and is not dependent on the Institute.⁹

Effects of Proposed Changes

This bill repeals the obsolete Florida Institute for Nuclear Detection and Security and its advisory board from the statutes.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Repeals s. 1004.63, F.S.

Section 2. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2012.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds, reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise

⁹ Conversation with Dr. David P. Norton, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs, College of Engineering, University of Florida, January 20, 2012.

revenue in the aggregate, nor reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES