



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

June 28, 2011

Secretary Kurt S. Browning
Secretary of State
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 S. Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Dear Secretary Browning:

By the authority vested in me as the Governor of Florida, and under the provisions of Article III, Section 8, of the Constitution of Florida, I do hereby transmit Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 404, with my signature, enacted during the 43rd Session of the Legislature of Florida, convened under the Constitution of 1968, during the Regular Session of 2011 and entitled:

An act relating to Transition to Adulthood Services....

This legislation addresses youth transitioning from the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice into the community and authorizes the Department of Education to issue a request for proposal for the creation of a pilot charter college preparatory boarding academy for certain at-risk youth. The bill contains specific required qualifications for bidders and details the information which must be provided in the proposals.

I support the Department of Juvenile Justice providing transition services to youths aging out of their system and preparing them for productive adult lives. I also support innovative education options and appreciate the potential benefits of a college preparatory boarding academy for at-risk youth. I am concerned however that the cost savings projected by the bill's proponents may not be realized without careful monitoring of the inter-agency plan described in the bill. This concern is allayed by the bill's provision that, "Funding for the operation of the boarding academy is contingent on the development of a plan by the Department of Education, the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Children and Family Services which details how educational and noneducational funds that would otherwise be committed to the students in the school and their families can be repurposed to provide for the operation of the school and related services."

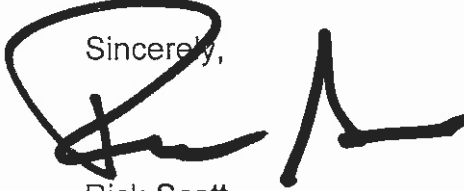
My continued support of the academy's funding and development is premised upon the following:

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- The inter-agency plan developed by the Departments of Education, Juvenile Justice, and Children and Family Services must clearly demonstrate that the cost of the entire Academy operation is less than the funding currently allocated to eligible students who are currently served by these three agencies.
- The academy, as described in the bill is clearly a "pilot" program and therefore the approval of this legislation does not guarantee future gubernatorial approval of funding beyond the pilot stage of the program.
- The inter-agency plan, in addition to demonstrating cost savings, must develop clear measurable outcomes for the pilot program.

While I believe the intent of this legislation, based on successful models in Maryland and Washington, D.C., is a worthwhile concept, it is important the academy accomplishes its goals without placing an undue burden on Florida's taxpayers.

I hereby sign into law, Senate Bill 404.

Sincerely,

Rick Scott
Governor