

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 04-245

WHEREAS, faith-based and community-based organizations have cared for many of Florida's neediest citizens, and historically have been indispensable in serving Florida's most under privileged children, families and neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, government cannot be replaced by such faith-based and community-based organizations, but can and should welcome them as partners; and

WHEREAS, there are many opportunities for faith-based and community-based organizations to partner with government entities to deliver services more effectively than either can do alone; and

WHEREAS, these services include, but are not limited to, caring for the elderly, providing educational assistance to Florida's disadvantaged students, curbing crime, addressing homelessness, conquering substance abuse, strengthening families and neighborhoods, and overcoming poverty; and

WHEREAS, many beneficial opportunities may be lost if faith-based and community-based groups are not aware of opportunities to participate with government entities in serving Florida's citizens, or are not equipped to participate on a level playing field, to the full extent permitted by law, in partnering or contracting with government entities for the delivery of services that serve a valid government purpose; and

WHEREAS, many beneficial opportunities may be lost if governmental entities do not make efforts to reach out and share information about opportunities to faith-based and community-based providers and assist new providers in partnering with governmental entities; and

WHEREAS, government may neither advance, nor inhibit religious expression, nor endorse any particular type of religion over non-religion, but must not discriminate against the provision of services by faith-based or community-based providers who are otherwise qualified to provide services; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial to encourage communication between governmental entities and faith-based and community-based organizations, recognizing that government can do a better job of providing information to, partnering with, learning from and encouraging the best practices of successful faith-based and community-based programs; and

WHEREAS, Volunteer Florida Foundation Inc., (“The Foundation”) is the non-profit direct support organization of the Florida Commission on Community Service, and is able to assist in securing training, technical assistance, and other support needed to accomplish the intent and purposes of this executive order.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JEB BUSH, Governor of the State of Florida, by the powers vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, do hereby promulgate the following Executive Order, effective immediately:

Section 1.

The Governor’s Faith-Based and Community Advisory Board (“Board”) is hereby created in order to help state government coordinate efforts to utilize and expand opportunities for faith-based and community-based organizations to address social needs in Florida’s communities.

Section 2.

The Board shall be composed of up to twenty-five members, all of whom shall be appointed by the Governor. Members shall not receive remuneration for their work. The Governor shall select a chairperson from the membership of the Board. Appointees may include, but shall not be limited to, representatives from various faiths, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, foundations, corporations, and municipalities. The Governor shall fill any vacancy occurring on the Board. All members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

Section 3.

The Board, working in partnership with the Foundation, shall advise the Governor on policies, priorities, and objectives for the state’s comprehensive effort to enlist, equip, enable, empower, and expand the work of faith-based, volunteer and other community organizations to the full extent permitted by law; the duties of the Board are, to the full extent permitted by law, to determine:

(a) How faith-based and community-based organizations can best compete with other organizations for the delivery of state services, regardless of an organization’s orientation, whether faith-based or secular;

(b) How best to develop and coordinate activities of faith-based and other community programs and initiatives, enhance such efforts in communities, and seek such resources, legislation and regulatory relief as may be necessary to accomplish these objectives;

(c) How best to identify and promote best practices across state government relating to the delivery of services by faith-based and other community organizations;

(d) How best to coordinate public awareness of faith-based and community nonprofit initiatives, such as demonstration pilots, public-private partnerships, volunteerism, and special projects;

(e) How best to encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community initiatives;

(f) How best to bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the Governor for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and other community programs;

(g) How best to develop and implement strategic initiatives under the Governor's leadership to strengthen the institutions of Florida's families and communities;

(h) How best to showcase and herald innovative grassroots non-profit organizations and civic initiatives;

(i) How best to eliminate unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community efforts to address social problems;

(j) How best to monitor implementation of the Governor's policy affecting faith-based and other community organizations; and

(k) How best to ensure that the efforts of faith-based and other community organizations meet objective criteria for performance and accountability.

Section 4.

The Board shall, by February 1, 2005, provide to the Governor a written report containing recommended policies, priorities, and objectives for the state's comprehensive effort to enlist, equip, enable, empower, and expand the work of faith-based, volunteer and other community organizations to the full extent permitted by law.

Section 5.

(a) The Board shall be housed administratively within the Executive Office of the Governor.

(b) The Foundation shall work in partnership with the Board in noticing and coordinating all meetings, which shall be open to the public.

(c) Each executive agency is directed, and all other agencies are requested, to render assistance and cooperation to the Board to the full extent permitted by law.

Section 6.

This executive order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by any party against the State of Florida, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

Section 7.

This executive order shall expire on January 1, 2007, unless extended by amendment.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, The Capitol, this 15th day of November 2004.

ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE