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1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to the City of Pensacola, Town of Century,  
3 and Escambia County; providing definitions; creating the  
4 Escambia County Consolidation Study Commission to develop  
5 a consolidation plan or unification of services for the  
6 City of Pensacola, Town of Century, and Escambia County;  
7 providing for the membership of the commission; providing  
8 for special advisory committees and membership; providing  
9 for meetings; specifying sources of funding; providing for  
10 private contributions; providing for clerical, technical,  
11 and legal assistance; requiring a referendum for approval  
12 of consolidation plan; providing for dissolution of the  
13 commission and reversion of commission property to the  
14 county; providing an effective date.

15  
16 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

17  
18 Section 1. Definitions.--

19 (1) "Board" means the Board of County Commissioners of  
20 Escambia County.

21 (2) "Commission" means the Escambia County Consolidation  
22 Study Commission.

23 (3) "Legislative delegation" means those members of the  
24 Legislature representing a district that encompasses any portion  
25 of Escambia County.

26 Section 2. Creation.--There is hereby created in Escambia  
27 County the Escambia County Consolidation Study Commission to  
28 study and develop a proposed consolidation plan for local

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29 governments or unification of administrative services in the  
30 City of Pensacola, the Town of Century, and Escambia County, in  
31 whole or in part, and specify how such a consolidated government  
32 or unification of services might operate. It is the intent of  
33 the legislative delegation that the consolidation plan proposed  
34 by the commission be submitted to the Escambia County  
35 Commission, the City of Pensacola, and the Town of Century for  
36 action before submission to the Escambia County Legislative  
37 Delegation by January 15, 2010, for introduction in the next  
38 regular session of the Legislature. A legislatively approved  
39 plan shall be submitted to the qualified electors of Escambia  
40 County for referendum to approve or reject the consolidation of  
41 local governments or unification of administrative services for  
42 the City of Pensacola, the Town of Century, and Escambia County.

43 Section 3. Membership.--

44 (1) The membership of the commission may not exceed 25  
45 persons. The members of the commission shall be appointed by  
46 July 1, 2009, as follows:

47 (a) The board shall appoint five members. Each  
48 commissioner shall appoint one member who shall reside, work, or  
49 own property in the appointing commissioner's district.

50 (b) The Mayor and the Town Council of the Town of Century  
51 shall appoint one member who shall be a resident of the Town of  
52 Century.

53 (c) The Pensacola City Council shall appoint two members  
54 who shall be residents of the City of Pensacola.

55 (d) The following organizations may each appoint one  
56 member to the commission:

57        1. The Escambia County branch of the National Association  
58 for the Advancement of Colored People.

59        2. The Escambia County Taxpayers' Association.

60        3. The League of Women Voters of Pensacola Bay Area.

61        4. The Pensacola Young Professionals.

62        5. The Pensacola Ministerial Alliance.

63        6. The Escambia County Farm Bureau.

64        7. The Home Builders Association of West Florida.

65        (e) The President of the University of West Florida shall  
66 appoint one member who shall have expertise in local government  
67 matters.

68        (f) Each of the following Escambia County constitutional  
69 officers shall appoint one member: sheriff, tax collector,  
70 property appraiser, clerk of court, and supervisor of elections.

71        (g) The Chief Judge of the First Judicial Circuit shall  
72 appoint two members who shall be members of The Florida Bar and  
73 have legal expertise in local government matters.

74        (h) The Escambia County School Board may appoint one  
75 member by a majority vote of the board.

76        (i) The Emerald Coast Utilities Authority shall appoint  
77 one member.

78        (2) There shall be created the Special Advisory Committee  
79 on Public Safety to provide advice and counsel to the commission  
80 on the integration of public safety services in the  
81 consolidation plan. Such committee shall meet no later than 30  
82 days after the effective date of this act. The committee shall  
83 elect a chairperson and report to the chairperson of the  
84 commission. Each of the following may serve as a member of the

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85 committee or appoint a representative:

86 1. The Sheriff of Escambia County.

87 2. The Chief of Police of the City of Pensacola.

88 3. The Escambia County Community Corrections Bureau.

89 4. The Escambia County Public Safety Bureau Chief.

90 5. The Fire Chief of the City of Pensacola.

91 6. The Fire Chief of Escambia County.

92 7. The Escambia County Medical Director.

93 8. The chairperson of the Escambia County Fire Services  
94 Advisory Board.

95 9. The Police Benevolent Association of the City of  
96 Pensacola.

97 10. The Police Benevolent Association of Escambia County.

98 11. The Chapter of the International Association of  
99 Firefighters of the City of Pensacola.

100 (3) There shall be created the Special Advisory Committee  
101 on Economic Development to provide advice and counsel to the  
102 commission. Each of the following may appoint a member to the  
103 committee:

104 1. Pensacola Junior College.

105 2. The Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce.

106 3. The Perdido Key Chamber of Commerce.

107 4. The Pensacola Downtown Improvement Board.

108 5. The Gulf Coast African American Chamber of Commerce.

109 6. The local chapter of the Florida Black Chamber of  
110 Commerce.

111 7. Florida's Great Northwest.

112 8. The Town of Century Chamber of Commerce.

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113        9. The Ruritan Club of Walnut Hill.

114        10. The Pensacola Beach Chamber of Commerce.

115        (4) There shall be created the Special Advisory Committee  
116 on Health Care to provide advice and counsel to the commission.  
117 Each of the following may appoint a member to the committee:

118        1. Baptist Health Care.

119        2. Sacred Heart Health System.

120        3. West Florida Hospital.

121        4. The Escambia County Health Department.

122        5. The Escambia Medical Society.

123        (5) Members shall serve without compensation. The failure  
124 of any person or organization to appoint a member or the failure  
125 of a member to serve shall not affect the validity of the  
126 recommendations of the commission or any special advisory  
127 committee. The appointing person or entity may replace any  
128 member who resigns or fails to serve. Failure to attend any two  
129 meetings without good cause constitutes failure to serve. A  
130 member may not be an elected state, county, or municipal  
131 official or a constitutional officer. A majority of the duly  
132 appointed members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

133        Section 4. Meetings, records, and reports.--All meetings  
134 and records of the commission shall be public, and meetings  
135 shall be held throughout Escambia County. The commission or a  
136 committee may visit local governments outside Escambia County to  
137 observe their operations. The commission shall elect a  
138 chairperson at the first meeting and shall use Robert's Rules of  
139 Order as its rules of procedure. The commission shall meet at  
140 the call of the chairperson or upon the call of any three

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141 members at least once a month from July 1, 2009, through January  
142 15, 2010. The commission shall compile and present by November  
143 30, 2009, a status report on its progress and tentative  
144 findings. Such status report shall be presented to the board,  
145 the City of Pensacola, the Town of Century, and the legislative  
146 delegation. The commission shall submit a proposed consolidation  
147 plan to the legislative delegation no later than January 15,  
148 2010.

149       Section 5. Funding and expenses.--Neither the state nor  
150 any governmental entity of the state has an obligation to fund  
151 the commission. However, the commission may solicit and receive  
152 private contributions limited to \$3,000 from any individual or  
153 for-profit entity and may solicit and receive other public  
154 contributions in support of its study, with accounting in the  
155 same manner as for public funds. The board or other governmental  
156 entities may furnish the commission with such services, office  
157 space, and supplies as may be requested by the commission and  
158 approved by the board or other governmental entities.

159       Section 6. Clerical, technical, and legal assistance.--The  
160 City of Pensacola, Town of Century, and Escambia County shall  
161 provide reasonable technical, legal, and clerical assistance to  
162 the commission.

163       Section 7. Referendum.--

164       (1) The consolidation of the governments of the City of  
165 Pensacola, the Town of Century, and Escambia County shall become  
166 effective only by approval of a majority vote of those electors  
167 of Escambia County voting in a referendum. The referendum shall  
168 be held, after approval of the consolidation plan by the

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169 Legislature, at the next general election, in accordance with  
170 the provisions of law relating to elections.

171 (2) In any referendum on consolidation, it shall be  
172 necessary for a majority of the electors in Escambia County to  
173 approve such consolidation, as well as a majority of electors in  
174 the City of Pensacola, in order for the governments of those two  
175 entities to be consolidated.

176 (3) In any referendum on consolidation, it shall be  
177 necessary for a majority of the electors in Escambia County to  
178 approve such consolidation, as well as a majority of electors in  
179 the Town of Century, in order for the governments of those two  
180 entities to be consolidated.

181 Section 8. Disposition of property.--The Escambia County  
182 Consolidation Study Commission shall dissolve by July 1, 2010,  
183 and all property of the commission shall thereupon become the  
184 property of the county.

185 Section 9. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.