EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 07-196

WHEREAS, of all Florida’s natural resources, children are its most precious; and

WHEREAS, last year 51,212 incidents of missing children were reported to Florida law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, children who are missing are at risk of criminal predatory behavior, child trafficking, exploitation and endangerment; and

WHEREAS, runaways who account for the majority of all missing children are at risk of criminal predatory behavior, child trafficking, exploitation and endangerment; and

WHEREAS, especially in circumstances where criminal predatory behavior or other clear endangerment is indicated, a coordinated law enforcement response and the prompt and widespread sharing of information concerning the missing child is critical; and

WHEREAS, Florida’s outdoor advertisers possess the industry-wide capacity to raise the awareness of millions of Floridians about the state’s missing children; and

WHEREAS, Florida has over 600 reported unidentified deceased persons, some whom are believed to be long term missing children who have met with foul play; and

WHEREAS, due to the advancement of computer and forensic technologies, the chances of identifying unidentified deceased children have increased; and by making a positive identification can provide answers to family members who are searching and can present law enforcement with leads to their death investigations; and
WHEREAS, the 1999 Florida Legislature designated the second Monday in every September to recognize Florida’s missing children and to increase awareness and understanding of the issue among our parents, citizens, and law enforcement officers;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHARLIE CRIST, Governor of Florida, in obedience to my solemn constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and pursuant to the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida, do hereby promulgate the following Executive Order effective immediately:

Section 1.

All state agencies and private entities that are under contract with the state to perform a state service, shall, upon the request of the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, immediately post photographs of specific missing children in conspicuous public areas under their control including but not limited to:

A. State-operated highways, including rest stops, visitor information centers, toll booth plaza facilities, and toll booth plaza ticket windows; and

B. State owned and operated facilities.

Each state agency, when feasible, will share information concerning missing children which may assist law enforcement in locating the missing children.

Each state agency and private entity contracting with the state to provide a state service will use its best reasonable efforts to have its employees sign up to receive AMBER alert messages through www.missingchildrenalert.com.

The Department of Management Services is directed to help coordinate compliance with these provisions in all state offices throughout Florida.
Section 2.

The Department of Education will work in partnership with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement on relevant efforts to prevent children from going missing and to rescue those who are missing.

Section 3.

The Department of Corrections is directed to make available to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and to local law enforcement agencies, the use of agency bloodhound tracking dogs to assist in search and rescue efforts when a child is reported missing.

Section 4.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement shall partner with private entities, such as the Florida Outdoor Advertising Association and its members, to coordinate the use of donated billboard space in an effort to notify Florida’s citizens when an AMBER alert is issued and to raise awareness of missing children.

Section 5.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement in conjunction with local law enforcement is directed to coordinate the activities of the statewide Child Abduction Response Teams (CART) to assist in sharing resources and in coordinating a community response in the event a child is missing and the team is activated.

Section 6.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement Missing Children Information Clearinghouse in conjunction with the Florida Medical Examiners Commission will continue to encourage medical examiners offices and local law enforcement agencies to collaborate together
and revisit unidentified deceased cases in order to resolve long term missing children cases under FDLE’s Joint Initiative to Identify Florida’s Unidentified Deceased.

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, and this 24th day of September 2007.

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GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

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SECRETARY OF STATE