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By the Committee on Commerce and Tourism; and Senator Siplin

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to credit reports; prohibiting an employer from using a job applicant's credit report or credit history to make certain hiring, compensation, or other employment decisions; providing specific situations where an employer may use such information; providing definitions; providing exemptions for certain types of employers; providing remedies for aggrieved persons; providing for court costs; providing for a plaintiff to post a bond in certain situations; amending s. 626.9541, F.S.; prohibiting an insurer using a rate, rating schedule, rating manual, or an underwriting rule that is not contained in a rating manual and is determined in whole or in part on the basis of a credit report or credit score of an insured; including the refusal to insure or continue to insure any individual or risk because of the insured's or applicant's credit report or credit score among the list of activities constituting unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts; amending s. 626.9741, F.S.; prohibiting the use by insurers of credit reports and credit scores in making rating determinations; deleting provisions limiting and regulating the use of credit scores by insurers when making rating determinations; deleting the definitions of the terms "adverse decision" and "tier"; providing an effective date.

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

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Section 1. <u>Use of a job applicant's credit report or credit</u> history.—

- (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), an employer may not use an applicant's credit report or credit history for the purpose of denying employment to the applicant or for determining the applicant's compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.
- (2) An employer may request or use an applicant's credit report or credit history if:
- (a) The information will be used for a purpose other than one prohibited by this section;
- (b) The employer has a bona fide purpose for requesting or using information in the credit report or credit history which is substantially related to the job; and
- (c) The ability to request such information was disclosed to the applicant and the employer obtained permission from the applicant to request the information.
- (3) For purposes of this section, a position for which an employer has a bona fide purpose includes a position that:
 - (a) Is managerial or supervisory;
- (b) Involves access to personal information of a customer, employee, or employer, except for personal information customarily provided in a retail transaction;
- (c) Involves a fiduciary responsibility to the employer, including the authority to issue payments, collect debts, transfer money, or enter into contracts;
- (d) Involves the use of an expense account or a corporate
 debit or credit card;

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(e) Authorizes the employee to have access to information, including a trade secret, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, or process that derives actual or potential independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from the disclosure or use of the information and is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy; or

- (f) Involves public safety, such as a law enforcement officer, peace officer, or other position involving enforcement of state or federal criminal laws.
 - (4) As used in paragraph (3)(a), the term:
- (a) "Managerial" means a position that requires an individual to formulate and effectuate management policies by expressing and making operative the decisions of the employer.
- (b) "Supervisory" means a position in which an individual has the authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or the responsibility to direct them, adjust their grievances, or recommend such action where the authority or responsibility is not merely routine or clerical, but requires the use of independent judgment.
 - (5) This section does not apply to an employer that is:
- (a) Expressly permitted or required to inquire into an applicant's credit report or credit history for employment purposes pursuant to a federal or state law.
- (b) A financial institution that accepts deposits that are insured by a federal agency, or an affiliate or subsidiary of

the financial institution.

(c) A credit union or state-chartered bank registered with the Office of Financial Regulation.

- (d) An entity that is registered as an investment advisor with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, or an affiliate of the entity.
- (6) (a) Without regard to any other remedy or relief to which a person is entitled, a person aggrieved by a violation of this section may bring an action to obtain a declaratory judgment that an act or practice violates this section and to enjoin the violator from further violations.
- (b) A person who has suffered a loss as a result of a violation of this section and prevails may recover actual damages, plus court costs.
- (c) In any action brought under this section, upon motion of the defendant, alleging that the action is frivolous, without legal or factual merit, or brought for the purpose of harassment, the court may, after hearing evidence as to the necessity therefor, require the plaintiff to post bond in an amount that the court finds reasonable to indemnify the defendant for any damages incurred, including reasonable attorney fees. This subsection does not apply to any action initiated by the enforcing authority.
- Section 2. Paragraphs (o) and (x) of subsection (1) of section 626.9541, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
- 626.9541 Unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices defined.—
- (1) UNFAIR METHODS OF COMPETITION AND UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE ACTS.—The following are defined as unfair methods of competition

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and unfair or deceptive acts or practices:

- (o) Illegal dealings in premiums; excess or reduced charges for insurance.—
- 1. Knowingly collecting any sum as a premium or charge for insurance, which is not then provided, or is not in due course to be provided, subject to acceptance of the risk by the insurer, by an insurance policy issued by an insurer as permitted by this code.
- 2. Knowingly collecting as a premium or charge for insurance any sum in excess of or less than the premium or charge applicable to such insurance, in accordance with the applicable classifications and rates as filed with and approved by the office, and as specified in the policy; or, in cases when classifications, premiums, or rates are not required by this code to be so filed and approved, premiums and charges collected from a Florida resident in excess of or less than those specified in the policy and as fixed by the insurer. This provision does shall not be deemed to prohibit the charging and collection, by surplus lines agents licensed under part VIII of this chapter, of the amount of applicable state and federal taxes, or fees as authorized by s. 626.916(4), in addition to the premium required by the insurer or the charging and collection, by licensed agents, of the exact amount of any discount or other such fee charged by a credit card facility in connection with the use of a credit card, as authorized by subparagraph (q)3., in addition to the premium required by the insurer. This subparagraph does shall not be construed to prohibit collection of a premium for a universal life or a variable or indeterminate value insurance policy made in

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146 accordance with the terms of the contract.

- 3.a. Imposing or requesting an additional premium for a policy of motor vehicle liability, personal injury protection, medical payment, or collision insurance or any combination thereof or refusing to renew the policy solely because the insured was involved in a motor vehicle accident unless the insurer's file contains information from which the insurer in good faith determines that the insured was substantially at fault in the accident.
- b. An insurer that which imposes and collects such a surcharge or which refuses to renew such policy shall, in conjunction with the notice of premium due or notice of nonrenewal, notify the named insured that he or she is entitled to reimbursement of such amount or renewal of the policy under the conditions listed below and will subsequently reimburse him or her or renew the policy, if the named insured demonstrates that the operator involved in the accident was:
 - (I) Lawfully parked;
- (II) Reimbursed by, or on behalf of, a person responsible for the accident or has a judgment against such person;
- (III) Struck in the rear by another vehicle headed in the same direction and was not convicted of a moving traffic violation in connection with the accident;
- (IV) Hit by a "hit-and-run" driver, if the accident was reported to the proper authorities within 24 hours after discovering the accident;
- (V) Not convicted of a moving traffic violation in connection with the accident, but the operator of the other automobile involved in such accident was convicted of a moving

175 traffic violation;

(VI) Finally adjudicated not to be liable by a court of competent jurisdiction;

(VII) In receipt of a traffic citation which was dismissed or nolle prossed; or

(VIII) Not at fault as evidenced by a written statement from the insured establishing facts demonstrating lack of fault which are not rebutted by information in the insurer's file from which the insurer in good faith determines that the insured was substantially at fault.

- c. In addition to the other provisions of this subparagraph, an insurer may not fail to renew a policy if the insured has had only one accident in which he or she was at fault within the current 3-year period. However, an insurer may nonrenew a policy for reasons other than accidents in accordance with s. 627.728. This subparagraph does not prohibit nonrenewal of a policy under which the insured has had three or more accidents, regardless of fault, during the most recent 3-year period.
- 4. Imposing or requesting an additional premium for, or refusing to renew, a policy for motor vehicle insurance solely because the insured committed a noncriminal traffic infraction as described in s. 318.14 unless the infraction is:
- a. A second infraction committed within an 18-month period, or a third or subsequent infraction committed within a 36-month period.
- b. A violation of s. 316.183, when such violation is a result of exceeding the lawful speed limit by more than 15 miles per hour.

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5. Upon the request of the insured, the insurer and licensed agent shall supply to the insured the complete proof of fault or other criteria that which justifies the additional charge or cancellation.

- 6. An No insurer may not shall impose or request an additional premium for motor vehicle insurance, cancel or refuse to issue a policy, or refuse to renew a policy because the insured or the applicant is a handicapped or physically disabled person, so long as such handicap or physical disability does not substantially impair such person's mechanically assisted driving ability.
- 7. An No insurer may not cancel or otherwise terminate any insurance contract or coverage, or require execution of a consent to rate endorsement, during the stated policy term for the purpose of offering to issue, or issuing, a similar or identical contract or coverage to the same insured with the same exposure at a higher premium rate or continuing an existing contract or coverage with the same exposure at an increased premium.
- 8. An No insurer may not issue a nonrenewal notice on any insurance contract or coverage, or require execution of a consent to rate endorsement, for the purpose of offering to issue, or issuing, a similar or identical contract or coverage to the same insured at a higher premium rate or continuing an existing contract or coverage at an increased premium without meeting any applicable notice requirements.
- 9. An No insurer may not shall, with respect to premiums charged for motor vehicle insurance, unfairly discriminate solely on the basis of age, sex, marital status, or scholastic

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10. An insurer may not use any rate, rating schedule, rating manual, or underwriting rule that is not contained in a rating manual and that is determined in whole or in part on the basis of an insured's credit report or credit score as defined in s. 626.9741.

- 11.10. Imposing or requesting an additional premium for motor vehicle comprehensive or uninsured motorist coverage solely because the insured was involved in a motor vehicle accident or was convicted of a moving traffic violation.
- 12.11. An No insurer may not shall cancel or issue a nonrenewal notice on any insurance policy or contract without complying with any applicable cancellation or nonrenewal provision required under the Florida Insurance Code.
- 13.12. An No insurer may not shall impose or request an additional premium, cancel a policy, or issue a nonrenewal notice on any insurance policy or contract because of any traffic infraction when adjudication has been withheld and no points have been assessed pursuant to s. 318.14(9) and (10). However, this subparagraph does not apply to traffic infractions involving accidents in which the insurer has incurred a loss due to the fault of the insured.
- (x) Refusal to insure.—In addition to other provisions of this code, the refusal to insure, or continue to insure, any individual or risk solely because of:
- 1. Race, color, creed, marital status, sex, or national origin;
- 2. The residence, age, or lawful occupation of the individual or the location of the risk, unless there is a

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reasonable relationship between the residence, age, or lawful occupation of the individual or the location of the risk and the coverage issued or to be issued;

- 3. The insured's or applicant's failure to agree to place collateral business with any insurer, unless the coverage applied for would provide liability coverage which is excess over that provided in policies maintained on property or motor vehicles;
- 4. The insured's or applicant's failure to purchase noninsurance services or commodities, including automobile services as defined in s. 624.124;
- 5. The fact that the insured or applicant is a public official; $\frac{1}{2}$
- 6. The fact that the insured or applicant had been previously refused insurance coverage by any insurer, when such refusal to insure or continue to insure for this reason occurs with such frequency as to indicate a general business practice; or.
- 7. The insured's or applicant's credit report or credit score as defined in s. 626.9741.
- Section 3. Section 626.9741, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 626.9741 Use of credit reports and credit scores by insurers.—
- (1) An insurer may not use credit reports or credit scores in making rating determinations. The purpose of this section is to regulate and limit the use of credit reports and credit scores by insurers for underwriting and rating purposes. This section applies only to personal lines motor vehicle insurance

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and personal lines residential insurance, which includes homeowners, mobile home owners' dwelling, tenants, condominium unit owners, cooperative unit owners, and similar types of insurance.

- (2) As used in this section, the term:
- (a) "Adverse decision" means a decision to refuse to issue or renew a policy of insurance; to issue a policy with exclusions or restrictions; to increase the rates or premium charged for a policy of insurance; to place an insured or applicant in a rating tier that does not have the lowest available rates for which that insured or applicant is otherwise eligible; or to place an applicant or insured with a company operating under common management, control, or ownership which does not offer the lowest rates available, within the affiliate group of insurance companies, for which that insured or applicant is otherwise eligible.
- (a) (b) "Credit report" means any written, oral, or other communication of any information by a consumer reporting agency, as defined in the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. ss. 1681 et seq., bearing on a consumer's credit worthiness, credit standing, or credit capacity, which is used or expected to be used or collected as a factor to establish a person's eligibility for credit or insurance, or any other purpose authorized pursuant to the applicable provision of such federal act. A credit score alone, as calculated by a credit reporting agency or by or for the insurer, may not be considered a credit report.
- (b) (c) "Credit score" means a score, grade, or value that is derived by using any or all data from a credit report in any

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type of model, method, or program, whether electronically, in an algorithm, computer software or program, or any other process, for the purpose of grading or ranking credit report data.

- (d) "Tier" means a category within a single insurer into which insureds with substantially similar risk, exposure, or expense factors are placed for purposes of determining rate or premium.
- (3) An insurer must inform an applicant or insured, in the same medium as the application is taken, that a credit report or score is being requested for underwriting or rating purposes. An insurer that makes an adverse decision based, in whole or in part, upon a credit report must provide at no charge, a copy of the credit report to the applicant or insured or provide the applicant or insured with the name, address, and telephone number of the consumer reporting agency from which the insured or applicant may obtain the credit report. The insurer must provide notification to the consumer explaining the reasons for the adverse decision. The reasons must be provided in sufficiently clear and specific language so that a person can identify the basis for the insurer's adverse decision. Such notification shall include a description of the four primary reasons, or such fewer number as existed, which were the primary influences of the adverse decision. The use of generalized terms such as "poor credit history," "poor credit rating," or "poor insurance score" does not meet the explanation requirements of this subsection. A credit score may not be used in underwriting or rating insurance unless the scoring process produces information in sufficient detail to permit compliance with the requirements of this subsection. It shall not be deemed

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577-02029-12 2012102c1 adverse decision if, due to the insured's credit report or credit score, the insured continues to receive a less favorable rate or placement in a less favorable tier or company at the time of renewal except for renewals or reunderwriting required by this section. (4) (a) An insurer may not request a credit report or score based upon the race, color, religion, marital status, age, gender, income, national origin, or place of residence of the applicant or insured. (b) An insurer may not make an adverse decision solely because of information contained in a credit report or score without consideration of any other underwriting or rating factor. (c) An insurer may not make an adverse decision or use a credit score that could lead to such a decision if based, in whole or in part, on: 1. The absence of, or an insufficient, credit history, which instance the insurer shall: a. Treat the consumer as otherwise approved by the Office of Insurance Regulation if the insurer presents information that such an absence or inability is related to the risk for the insurer; b. Treat the consumer as if the applicant or insured had neutral credit information, as defined by the insurer; c. Exclude the use of credit information as a factor and use only other underwriting criteria; 2. Collection accounts with a medical industry code, if so identified on the consumer's credit report; 3. Place of residence; or

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4. Any other circumstance that the Financial Services
Commission determines, by rule, lacks sufficient statistical
correlation and actuarial justification as a predictor of
insurance risk.

- (d) An insurer may use the number of credit inquiries requested or made regarding the applicant or insured except for:
- 1. Credit inquiries not initiated by the consumer or inquiries requested by the consumer for his or her own credit information.
- 2. Inquiries relating to insurance coverage, if so identified on a consumer's credit report.
- 3. Collection accounts with a medical industry code, if so identified on the consumer's credit report.
- 4. Multiple lender inquiries, if coded by the consumer reporting agency on the consumer's credit report as being from the home mortgage industry and made within 30 days of one another, unless only one inquiry is considered.
- 5. Multiple lender inquiries, if coded by the consumer reporting agency on the consumer's credit report as being from the automobile lending industry and made within 30 days of one another, unless only one inquiry is considered.
- (e) An insurer must, upon the request of an applicant or insured, provide a means of appeal for an applicant or insured whose credit report or credit score is unduly influenced by a dissolution of marriage, the death of a spouse, or temporary loss of employment. The insurer must complete its review within 10 business days after the request by the applicant or insured and receipt of reasonable documentation requested by the insurer, and, if the insurer determines that the credit report

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or credit score was unduly influenced by any of such factors, the insurer shall treat the applicant or insured as if the applicant or insured had neutral credit information or shall exclude the credit information, as defined by the insurer, whichever is more favorable to the applicant or insured. An insurer shall not be considered out of compliance with its underwriting rules or rates or forms filed with the Office of Insurance Regulation or out of compliance with any other state law or rule as a result of granting any exceptions pursuant to this subsection.

(5) A rate filing that uses credit reports or credit scores must comply with the requirements of s. 627.062 or s. 627.0651 to ensure that rates are not excessive, inadequate, or unfairly discriminatory.

(6) An insurer that requests or uses credit reports and credit scoring in its underwriting and rating methods shall maintain and adhere to established written procedures that reflect the restrictions set forth in the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, this section, and all rules related thereto.

(7) (a) An insurer shall establish procedures to review the credit history of an insured who was adversely affected by the use of the insured's credit history at the initial rating of the policy, or at a subsequent renewal thereof. This review must be performed at a minimum of once every 2 years or at the request of the insured, whichever is sooner, and the insurer shall adjust the premium of the insured to reflect any improvement in the credit history. The procedures must provide that, with respect to existing policyholders, the review of a credit report will not be used by the insurer to cancel, refuse to renew, or

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require a change in the method of payment or payment plan.

- (b) However, as an alternative to the requirements of paragraph (a), an insurer that used a credit report or credit score for an insured upon inception of a policy, who will not use a credit report or score for reunderwriting, shall reevaluate the insured within the first 3 years after inception, based on other allowable underwriting or rating factors, excluding credit information if the insurer does not increase the rates or premium charged to the insured based on the exclusion of credit reports or credit scores.
- (3) (8) The commission may adopt rules to administer this section. The rules may include, but need not be limited to:
- (a) Information that must be included in filings to demonstrate compliance with subsection (3).
- (b) Statistical detail that insurers using credit reports or scores under subsection (5) must retain and report annually to the Office of Insurance Regulation.
- (c) Standards that ensure that rates or premiums associated with the use of a credit report or score are not unfairly discriminatory, based upon race, color, religion, marital status, age, gender, income, national origin, or place of residence.
- (d) Standards for review of models, methods, programs, or any other process by which to grade or rank credit report data and which may produce credit scores in order to ensure that the insurer demonstrates that such grading, ranking, or scoring is valid in predicting insurance risk of an applicant or insured.
 - Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.