

Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

CS/CS/SB 370 — Florida Wing of the Civil Air Patrol

by Appropriations Committee; Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee; and Senators Stargel and Hukill

The bill provides certain employment protections for members of the Florida Wing of the Civil Air Patrol who are absent from their place of employment due to service or training with the Civil Air Patrol. The Civil Air Patrol is a nonprofit, congressionally chartered corporation that serves as an auxiliary to the U.S. Air Force. The organization is composed of volunteer members who perform homeland security, disaster relief, and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state, and local agencies.

The bill requires a public or private employer with 15 or more employees to provide up to 15 days of unpaid leave (Civil Air Patrol leave) annually to an employee who is a senior member of the Florida Wing of the Civil Air Patrol for the purpose of participating in a Civil Air Patrol training or mission. The bill also:

- Prohibits an employer from discharging, reprimanding, or otherwise penalizing an employee for taking Civil Air Patrol leave;
- Prohibits the termination of an employee for a period of one year after the date the employee returns to work from Civil Air Patrol leave, except for cause;
- Entitles an employee returning to work from Civil Air Patrol leave to certain seniority rights; and
- Authorizes a cause of action for a Civil Air Patrol member who is affected by a violation of a provision in the bill.

The bill states that an important state interest is fulfilled by allowing senior members of the Florida Wing of Civil Air Patrol to take authorized Civil Air Patrol leave.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2017.

Vote: Senate 33-0; House 117-0