

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

CS/HB 333 — Minimum Officer Qualifications

by Criminal Justice Subcommittee and Rep. Burgess and others (CS/CS/SB 470 by Appropriations Committee; Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee; and Senator Stargel)

The bill exempts individuals who served in the special operations forces of the U.S. military from completing the basic recruit training program for law enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officers. To qualify for the exemption, an applicant must have served in the special operations forces for a minimum of five years and must apply for the exemption within four years of separating from the special operations forces.

The bill defines “special operations forces” to include servicemembers of the Army Special Forces and Army 75th Ranger Regiment; the Navy SEALs and Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewmen; the Air Force Combat Control, Pararescue, and Tactical Air Control Party specialists; the Marine Corps Critical Skills Operators; and any other component of the U.S. Special Operations Command approved by the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (Commission).

An applicant who served in the special operations forces and is exempt from completing a basic recruit training program must also meet the minimum officer qualifications prescribed in s. 943.13, F.S., such as passing a physical examination and having good moral character. Additionally, an exempt applicant must demonstrate proficiency in high-liability areas and pass the officer certification examination within 1 year of receiving the exemption, and complete any additional training required by the Commission, based on the applicant’s prior training and experience.

The bill directs the Commission to adopt rules that establish the criteria and procedures to determine if an applicant is exempt from completing a basic recruit training program.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2018.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 109-1