

Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs and Space

CS/HB 171 — Postsecondary Education for Certain Military Personnel

by Higher Education and Career Readiness Subcommittee; and Reps. Ponder, Hattersley, and others (CS/SB 372 by Education Committee and Senators Lee, Cruz, Harrell, Broxson, Perry, and Stewart)

This bill requires the Florida Department of Education to establish a uniform process for awarding postsecondary college and career education credit for training and education acquired in the military. The Board of Governors of the State University System and the State Board of Education will adopt regulations and rules, respectively, in consultation with the state Department of Veterans' Affairs, to create this process.

The bill requires the Articulation Coordinating Committee (committee) to convene a 13-member workgroup by July 15, 2020, to select postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours to be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by servicemembers.

The bill provides for the following membership of the workgroup: 1 member who is the chair of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, or a designee; 4 members who represent academic affairs administrators and faculty from state universities, appointed by the chair of the Board of Governors; 4 members who represent academic affairs administrators and faculty from Florida College System institutions, appointed by the chair of the State Board of Education; 2 members who are faculty from career centers, appointed by the State Board of Education; and 2 members who are veterans, appointed by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

After meeting, the workgroup must provide recommendations to the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education by December 1, 2020, for approval at the next meeting of each board. After approval of the recommendations, the committee will approve a prioritized list, to be annually updated, of equivalencies and credit or clock hours to be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by servicemembers.

Awarded credit and clock hours are transferrable to other state universities, Florida College System institutions, and career centers.

The bill also provides for a waiver of fees for transcript requests by active duty servicemembers and honorably discharged veterans, and their spouses and dependents. Specifically, state universities, Florida College System institutions, career centers operated by a school district, and charter technical career centers are required to waive the fee on transcripts.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0