

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA
MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, SPACE, AND
DOMESTIC SECURITY
Senator Wright, Chair
Senator Torres, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 17, 2023
TIME: 3:30—5:00 p.m.
PLACE: 301 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Wright, Chair; Senator Torres, Vice Chair; Senators Berman, Calatayud, Collins, Pizzo, and Rodriguez

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	Presentation by Commander Dennis Baker, Chairman of Florida Veterans Foundation		Presented
2	Presentation by Joe Marino, Executive Director of Veterans Florida		Presented
Other Related Meeting Documents			



FLORIDA VETERANS

— F O U N D A T I O N —

NO FLORIDA VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

Who We Are

- Established by the Florida Legislature in 2008
- Direct Support Organization of Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA)
 - 501(C)(3) Nonprofit - Accountability
- *Independent Audit* ▪ *FDVA statutory oversight* ▪ *990 forms are on HelpFIVets.org.*
- *FVF is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Resources.*





NO FLORIDA VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

Serve All Florida Veterans

- 28,000 Florida Veterans Monthly
- 375 Florida Veterans Service Organizations (VSO's)
- 67 Counties - 170 CVSO's
- Provides Education & Relief Resources to Florida Veterans
- Partnerships (FVC, CCTB, MOM, DAV, NE FL Women Veterans, 5 Star, BALS, VTC, Heroes' Mile, MOM, SOF, PVR, NAVF, FAME)
- Ambassadors (Colonel DJ Reyes, USA), Low Cost Affordable Housing, VTC, VA Advisor on Veteran Homelessness
- Board Members (Paul Kimbel, USA, MESA, Wiggle mattress Reduces interface pressure through immersion and alleviates fall risks. Overlay was designed to offer therapy without the use of a hospital bed. This will enhance quality of life and keep them in the same bed with their loved ones

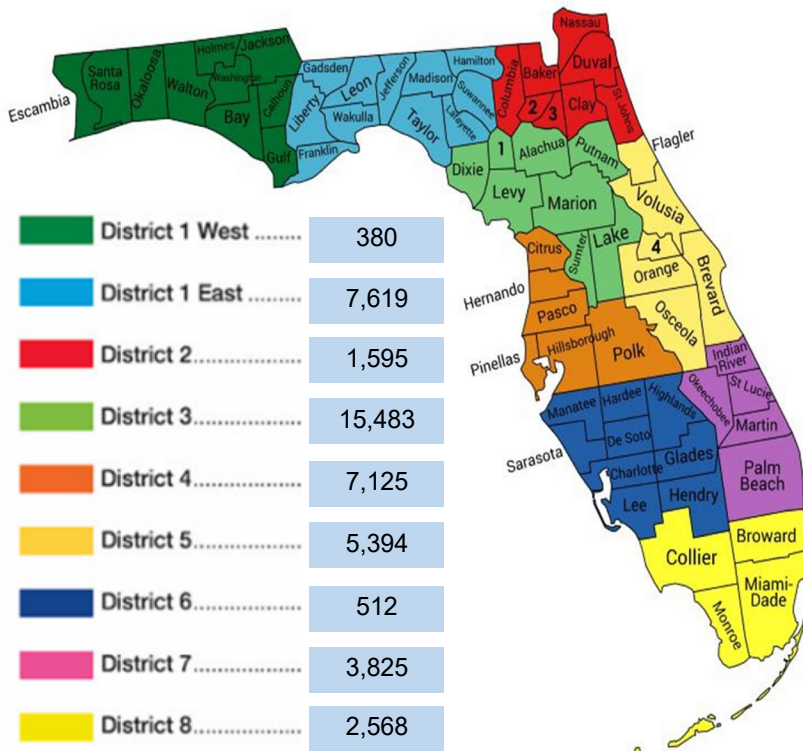


NO FLORIDA VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

Fiscal Year - July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

Suicide Prevention ▪ Emergency Financial Assistance ▪ Emergency Crisis Hotlines
 Aging War time Veterans Claims ▪ Veteran Outreach Programs ▪ Homeless Veterans

Veterans Served by District



Statwide By The Numbers

Services & Programs	
FVF's Free Claim Services for Aging Veterans Recovered \$17.7 Million Federal Dollars Annually For 1,038 Veterans/Survivors In Long Term Care Subsidized Benefit	
Veterans Direct Assistance	\$373,000.00
Veterans Served	
FVF Staff Direct Referrals & Assistance	2,812
FVF Board & Volunteers	67,823
Veterans & Families Outreach	
Emergency Crisis Hotlines	144,000+
Free Veterans Benefit Guides	150,000

- 100% Firewatch Suicide Prevention Qualified
- Alternative Therapy HBOT
- Funded Servers 4 Heroes
- Coordinated TC's Practical in nursing homes by students
- Focus on the Veteran Family Model
- Toxic Exposure Town Halls / Pact Act – Molina Health
- Bridging for the future with current data and outreach
- Collaborating with new partners – CVEB, Community Veterans Engagement Board working between community organizations and the VA with Coordinated Assistance Network

www.CANportal.org



- Gadsden Flag License Plate –
- 90% direct to Veterans.
- 10% to get into magazines and newspapers to get community - based information

Aging Wartime Veterans & Survivors

Aid & Attendance (A&A)

**50,000 Veterans X \$60,000 (Average
Benefit)**

= \$3,000,000,000 In Benefits

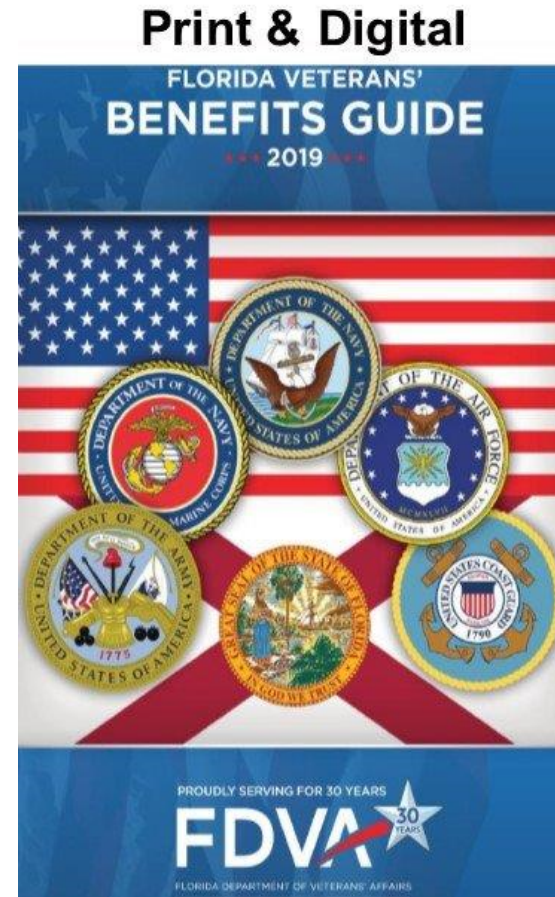
At NO COST TO THE VETERAN!

Federal VA \$ to the State = Medicaid \$

TAX FREE



VA Survivors & Burial Benefits Kit



The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

1/17/23

Meeting Date

Florida Veterans Foundation

Committee

Name Paul Kimbel

Phone 727-614-6664

Address 152 Sage Cir

Street

Email PKimbel@mesamedical.us

Crystal Beach FL

City

State

34681

Zip

Speaking: For Against Information OR Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

THE FLORIDA SENATE
APPEARANCE RECORD

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)

1/17/23
Meeting Date

Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic FDVA Update

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Bob Aszalos

Job Title Deputy Executive Director

Address The Capitol Room 2105
Street

Phone 850-284-1166

Tallahassee FL 32399
City State Zip

Email Aszalosb@fdva.state.us

Speaking: For Against Information

Waive Speaking: In Support Against
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Florida Dept of Veterans Affairs

Appearing at request of Chair: Yes No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature: Yes No

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VETERANS FLORIDA

Your Pursuit • Our Power

Mission and Programs

Purpose

Veterans Florida is a non-profit corporation created by the State of Florida in 2014 to help veterans fully transition to civilian life in the Sunshine State and to promote Florida, the most veteran-friendly state in the country, as the best place to reside upon leaving the military.

Mission

Attract and retain Veterans and their families by connecting them to employment, training and educational opportunities

Strengthen Florida businesses by educating them on the value and skill sets Veterans bring to the workforce and providing training resources for their Veteran hires

Enhance the entrepreneurial skills of Veterans

Administration

The Board of Directors, comprised of members appointed, three each, by the Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker, administers the Florida Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Program under the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs.

Operational and VETS Program funding provided under state's Health and Human Services Budget.

Board of Directors



Col (Ret) USMC, Rocky
McPherson, Chair



1SG (Ret) USA, Tom Rice,
Treasurer



BG (Ret) USA, Jerry Neff



Angela Drzewiecki



MCPO (Ret) USN, Mark
Harden



COL (Ret) USA, Robert
Kirila, Vice Chair



CPT (Ret) USN, Jeff Cathey

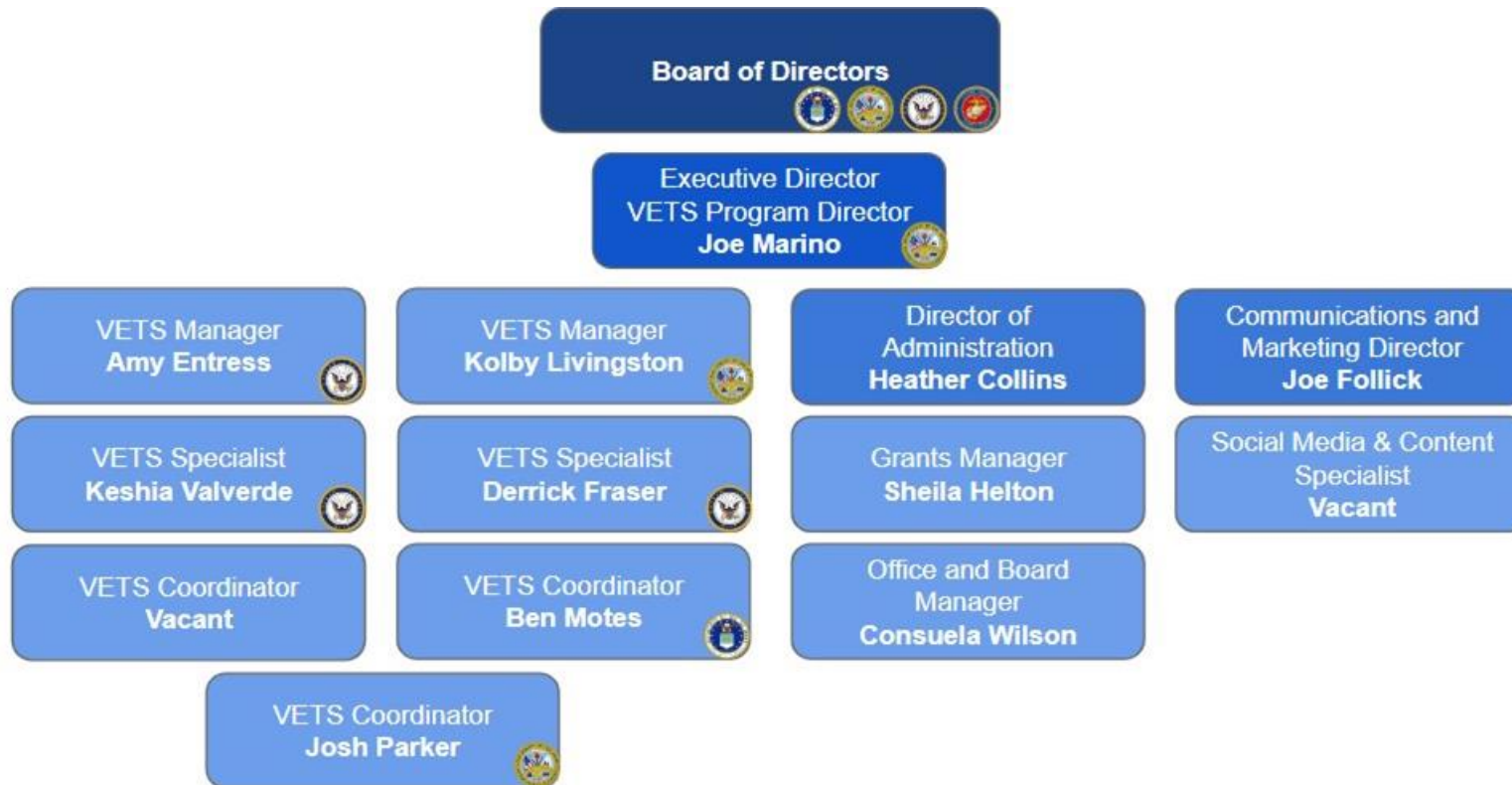


Lynda Weatherman



Alan Suskey, USA,
Secretary

Staff Organizational Chart



Current FY Funding

Program	Amount	Funder
Operations	\$400,000 (recurring)	State of Florida
VETS Program	\$2,000,000 (nonrecurring)	State of Florida
Agriculture Program	\$245,000	USDA/NIFA
VETS Supplemental	\$50,000	Corporate Grant
Unrestricted	\$40,000	Cash on hand; Corporate donations; Expo remainder

Government Relations

- 2023-24 Legislative Budget Request Submitted

Funding Area	Request	Impact
VETS Program	\$2,000,000 Nonrecurring	Maintain

- Public Records exemption
- Military/Medics Bill - HB 139
- Appointment/Reappointment

VETS Program

Veterans Employment and Training Services, Section 295.22, Florida Statutes

veteransflorida.org

Statute

Services

Promote the state to veterans

Marketing with VISIT Florida

Veterans seeking employment

Career Services

Employers seeking veterans

Workforce Recruiting

Workforce grant for employers

Workforce Training Grant

Veteran entrepreneur initiative

Entrepreneurship Program

Florida's principal DOD SkillBridge assistance organization

Florida SkillBridge Initiative



VETS Program Partners

Partner Agreements	2021-22 Executed	2022-23 Executed
Workforce Training	56	45
Workforce Recruiting	99	69
SkillBridge Training	104	82
SkillBridge Recruiting	5	17
Agriculture (USDA/NIFA)	13	13
Entrepreneur Training	14	13
Total Agreement Packets	145	125

VETS Program

Veteran Leads

Veteran Leads				
Open Leads	New 2022-23	New Last Month	Outside Florida	HOR Outside Florida
648	1,381	209	35%	54%

	Open Lead Interests	Active Qualified Veterans
Career	347	1,130
SkillBridge	319	525
Entrepreneurship	185	1,668
Agriculture	113	222
Resources	143	246
Total	648	3,348

VETS Program

FY 2022-23 All Training Reports

Training Stage	Workforce	SkillBridge	Entrepreneur	Agriculture	Total
Training	14	21	28	5	68
Trained	282	25	192	0	499
Total	296	46	220	5	567

Marketing

US Servicemembers 12 months prior to, and veterans within 24 months after, separating or retiring from the military

200,000

separate each year across the country

Geographically located at major and minor military installations in Florida and around the country, predominantly in the Southeast US, Texas, California, and East Coast US

Marketing

Audience Overview

Platform	Audience Size
LinkedIn	7,004
YouTube	603
Facebook	79,317
Twitter	818
Instagram	1,301

LinkedIn Content Engagement Comparison

Page	Audience Size	Post Engagement	Engagement Rate
Veterans Florida	7,004	3,256	46.49%
Hiring Our Heroes	453,582	25,294	5.58%
RecruitMilitary	115,343	10,669	9.25%
Hire Military	384,108	24,062	6.26%

Marketing



Veterans Florida

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A high-growth economy, no taxes on income or military retirement, and beautiful weather all year. Create a profile to let us power your pursuit.

**HIGH SPEED,
LOW DRAG.**

Careers. Resumes. Placement.

**VETERANS
FLORIDA**
Your Pursuit • Our Power

The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) official information does not imply or constitute DOD endorsement.



Veterans Florida

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The country's top schools? ✓
Veteran resource centers on every campus? ✓
Booming economy? ✓
Florida's the top state for veterans and it's not even close.
<https://www.veteransflorida.org/veteran-r.../higher-education/>

**# 1 FOR
HIGHER
EDUCATION**

**VETERANS
FLORIDA**
Your Pursuit • Our Power

Marketing

Major Sponsorships		
Event	Where	When
Sun n' Fun Aerospace Expo	Lakeland	Mar 28 - Apr 2, 2023
National Salute to America's Heroes	Miami Beach	May 27-28, 2023
Gulf Coast Jam	Panama City Beach	June 1-4, 2023

Monthly Marketing Themes	
December	Logistics
January	SkillBridge
February	Franchising & Acquisition
March	Legislative
April - June	Expo Marketing

Marketing

RecruitMilitary Job Fair	Norfolk, VA	Oct 26, 2022	Livingston, Fraser
Tampa Bay EDC Annual Meeting	Tampa	Oct 19, 2022	Dudley
RecruitMilitary Job Fair	Jacksonville	Oct 13, 2022	Fraser, Motes
Florida MakeMore Manufacturing Summit	Orlando	Oct 12, 2022	Barrow
Florida Defense Forum	Fort Walton Beach	Sep 21 - 22, 2022	Marino, Barrow
RecruitMilitary Job Fair	Virtual	Sep 20, 2022	Livingston, Valverde
RecruitMilitary Job Fair	Fort Hood, TX	Sep 14, 2022	Fraser, Livingston
TriBase Job Fair	Jacksonville	Sep 7, 2022	Livingston, Parker

Career Services

Transition Services

- Inform about Florida industries and opportunities
- Activity checkpoints as retirement or separation approaches

Career Services

- Skills and career preference assessments
- Resume assistance
- Interview preparation

Job Placement

Coach veterans through start date at new job

Available to transitioning service members, veterans, Guard/Reserve, and spouses

Entrepreneurship

Workshops and Networking

- Topical and specific lessons for a group lasting a few hours
- Build their local business and mentorship network

Facilitated Cohorts

- In depth courses over several weeks
- 10-12 veteran businesses in Idea/Startup or Growth
- Pathway for moving business to next stage
- Mentoring provided

Co Working and Incubators

- Reserved memberships for veterans to take advantage of office and meeting space, local resources, and mentoring

Available to transitioning service members, veterans, and Guard/Reserve - spouses may join

Entrepreneur

FY 2022-23 Partners

Partner	Location	Startup	Growth	Workshops	Network
Action Zone, Inc.	Tampa	3	2	4	4
Florida Association of Veteran Owned Businesses	Statewide			18	
Florida Atlantic University	Boca Raton	2	1	4	4
Florida Gulf Coast University	Fort Myers	2	1	17	4
SWFL Inc	Bonita Springs			10	4
University of North Florida	Jacksonville	1		4	
Veterans Entrepreneurship Initiative	Orlando	3	2	7	4

Agriculture

UF/IFAS Internship

- 6 months paid fellowship at a University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Research Center
- Learn skills in various Florida agricultural areas from farming to ranching

Job Placement

Place into full time work in agriculture industry

Available to transitioning service members, veterans, and Guard/Reserve. Veterans and Guard/Reserve access program through our USDA funded **AgVets** three year grant. Transitioning servicemembers access program through our DoD **SkillBridge** certification.

Agriculture

FY 2022-23 USDA/NIFA Partners

Research and Education Center	Location	Research and Education Center	Location
Fort Lauderdale REC	Davie	North Florida REC - Suwannee Valley	Live Oak
Gulf Coast REC	Wimauma	Range Cattle REC	Ona
Hastings REC (NEW)	Hastings	Southwest Florida REC	Immokalee
Honey Bee Ext Lab (NEW)	Gainesville	Tropical REC	Homestead
Indian River REC	Ft Pierce	Tropical Aquaculture Lab	Ruskin
Mid-Florida REC	Apopka	West Florida REC	Milton

SkillBridge

Program

- Servicemembers with less than 180 days until separation or retirement
- Gain workforce training at an employer or industry partner under an apprenticeship or internship in lieu of their military duties
- Retain their full DoD pay and benefits.
- Commander approval


Available to transitioning service members

Industries

- Aerospace, logistics, law enforcement, agriculture, etc.

2023 NDAA codified DOD SkillBridge into law and is expected to receive dedicated funding in the future; in the meantime, new training approvals have been waitlisted

SkillBridge

Placements					
Since 2020-21		From Outside Florida		HOR Outside Florida	
98		70%		47%	
Mid-Florida Research and Education Center	S&B Metal Products of South Florida	ARES Technical Services	Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center	HSU Educational Foundation	Renegade Air Group
Range Cattle Research and Education Center	Florida Department of Economic Opportunity	Gulf Coast Research and Education Center	Maritech Machine	HT Hackney	Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge
Vets2PM	Piper Aircraft, Inc	Randy Wise Homes	Legends Airways	Gulf Coast State College	Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office
Florida Highway Patrol	Southwest Florida Research and Education Center	Pensacola Police Department	North Florida Research and Education Center	Boca Aircraft Maintenance, LLC	Indian River Research and Education Center
Vineyards Country Club	West Florida Research and Education Center				

Mission and Programs



veteransflorida.org

Copies of these slides and additional materials may be requested and obtained by emailing marino@veteransflorida.org

The Florida Senate
APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Veterans Florida

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

1/17/23

Meeting Date

Mil/Vet/Space

Committee

Name Joe Marino

Phone 850 296 8268

Address 930 Thomassville Rd #100

Email marino@veteransflorida.org

Street

Tall

City

FL

State

32303

Zip

Speaking: For Against Information **OR** Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:
Veterans Florida

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

1/17/23
Meeting Date

Military Veterans Affairs
Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name JAMES HARTSELL

Phone (850) 487-1533

Address 400 S. Monroe St

Email HARTSELL@FOVA.STATE.FL.US

Tallahassee FL 32399
City State Zip

Speaking: For Against Information OR Waive Speaking: In Support Against

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

CourtSmart Tag Report

Room: SB 301

Case No.:

Type:

Caption: Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

Judge:

Started: 1/17/2023 3:30:35 PM

Ends: 1/17/2023 4:29:01 PM

Length: 00:58:27

3:30:43 PM Vice Chair Torres calls the meeting to order
3:30:56 PM CAA calls the roll and announces a quorum
3:31:00 PM Pledge of Allegiance led by Senator Pizzo
3:31:34 PM Vice Chair with opening comments
3:32:03 PM Tab 1 Presentation by Paul Kimbel, District Rep with Florida Veterans Foundation
3:47:14 PM Chair returned to Chair Wright
3:47:25 PM Senator Berman with question
3:47:45 PM Mr. Kimbel responds
3:47:56 PM Senator Berman with question
3:47:59 PM Mr. Kimbel responds
3:48:15 PM Chair Wright with question
3:48:20 PM Mr. Kimbel responds
3:48:40 PM Chair Wright with question
3:49:58 PM Mr. Kimbel responds
3:50:39 PM Chair Wright with question
3:50:44 PM Mr. Kimbel responds
3:50:54 PM Mr. Bob Asztalos, FDVA responds
3:51:13 PM Senator Pizzo with comments
3:52:15 PM Senator Collins with comments
3:53:33 PM Chair Wright with comments
3:53:46 PM Chair turned over to Vice Chair Torres
3:53:56 PM Tab 2 Presentation by Joe Marino, Executive Director of Veterans Florida
4:09:28 PM Vice Chair Torres with question
4:09:56 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:12:24 PM Chair returned to Chair Wright
4:13:02 PM Chair Wright with comments
4:13:17 PM Senator Calatayud with question
4:13:23 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:15:54 PM Senator Calatayud with follow-up
4:16:01 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:18:03 PM Vice Chair Torres with question
4:18:07 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:19:10 PM Vice Chair Torres with question
4:19:11 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:19:40 PM Senator Pizzo with question
4:19:45 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:19:55 PM Senator Pizzo with question
4:19:58 PM Dir. Marino responds
4:20:04 PM Chair Wright with comments
4:21:52 PM Dir. Marino with comments
4:22:25 PM Chair Wright with closing comments
4:22:35 PM Vice Chair Torres with comments
4:24:18 PM General Hartsell with comments
4:26:28 PM Chair Wright with question
4:26:32 PM General Hartsell responds
4:27:41 PM Senator Pizzo with question
4:28:08 PM General Hartsell responds
4:28:38 PM Senator Collins moves to adjourn
4:28:47 PM Meeting adjourned