

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

CS/HB 339 — Education of Dependents of Deceased or Disabled Servicemembers, Prisoners of War, and Persons Missing in Action

by Local Administration, Federal Affairs, and Special Districts Subcommittee and Rep. Yarkosky and others (CS/SB 550 by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Burgess)

The bill removes a 1-year residency requirement on educational benefits provided to a dependent child or spouse of a disabled or deceased servicemember through the Scholarships for Children and Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans program. A dependent or spouse of a deceased or disabled person who served in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, Coast Guard, Florida National Guard, or United States Reserve Forces may be eligible for a scholarship under this program if eligibility requirements are met.

The bill revises the residency requirement providing that a dependent child or spouse may receive the educational benefits if Florida was listed as the servicemember's official home of record in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database immediately preceding the death or disability of the servicemember or if the dependent child or spouse of the servicemember qualifies as a resident for tuition purposes (RFTP). Qualifying as an RFTP means that the child or spouse is a dependent for purposes of tax filings.

The bill similarly revises educational benefits available to dependent children of prisoners of war, persons missing in action, or persons who died or were disabled during the military operations of Operation Eagle Claw, Operation Urgent Fury, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Desert Shield, or Operation Just Cause.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0

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

CS/HB 485 — Veterans' Services and Recognition

by Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee and Reps. Salzman, Smith, and others (CS/SB 824 by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Collins)

The bill establishes the Division of Long-term Care in the Department of Veterans' Affairs (department) and creates the Veterans' Adult Day Health Care of Florida Act to provide uniform basic standards for the operation of veterans' adult day health care programs for eligible veterans in need of services.

The act provides:

- For appointment of an operator by the Executive Director of the department;
- Eligibility requirements for a veteran to participate in the program;
- Priority order for admission and authority for a self-paying veteran to participate;
- That the program is subject to audit or inspection by the Auditor General or the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability; and
- That unless the state's standards are more restrictive, the standards to be applied by the department to regulate program operations are those prescribed by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

The bill revises the requirements for employment as a veteran service officer to allow a veteran who served in the active military, naval, or air service and was discharged or released under honorable conditions, or later received an upgraded honorable discharge to qualify.

The bill also provides that the Governor may annually issue a proclamation designating the week of November 11 as Veterans Week, and encourages public officials, schools, private organizations, and all residents to commemorate the week by honoring those who served in times of war and peace.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 115-0

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

CS/SB 574 — Termination of Agreements by a Servicemember

by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Burgess

The bill creates a definition of the term “government quarters” applicable to the termination of a rental agreement by a servicemember who receives military orders requiring him or her to move into government quarters, or who becomes eligible to live in and opts to move into government quarters. The effect of adding the definition is that privatized military housing that is owned, operated, or managed by a private sector company may qualify as available government quarters which would allow a servicemember to terminate a private rental agreement.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 115-0

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

CS/HB 635 — Dental Services for Veterans

by Local Administration, Federal Affairs, and Special Districts Subcommittee and Rep. Maney and others (CS/SB 366 by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senators Burgess, Perry, and Gruters)

The bill establishes the Veterans Dental Care Grant Program within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The purpose of the program is to provide dental care to in-state veterans.

Eligible veterans are those who have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Space Force, Florida National Guard, and the United States Reserve Forces. To further qualify, a veteran must have been honorably released from service or later received an upgraded discharge under honorable conditions.

The bill requires the department to contract with a statewide direct-support organization (DSO) to administer the program. The DSO must have proven experience in establishing and implementing veteran programs, including those that provide dental services. The DSO will distribute grants to eligible nonprofits that have experience in providing dental care to veterans.

Funding for the program is subject to legislative appropriation. No funding was provided for the program in SB 2500 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0

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

CS/HB 1189 — Monuments

by State Administration and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee and Rep. Salzman and others (SB 1020 by Senator Wright)

The bill establishes a Florida Space Exploration Monument to recognize the importance of space exploration in this state, including the past, current, and future contributions of those individuals and families who have gone unrecognized. The Department of Management Services (DMS) will administer the monument and coordinate with the Division of Historical Resources of the Department of State regarding a plan for the monument's design, cost, and placement on the premises of the Capitol Complex.

In addition, the DMS, in consultation with Space Florida, must establish a contest for individuals to submit designs for the monument and to appoint a selection committee to choose the design. The bill requires the DMS to submit the plan to the Governor, President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2024.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0

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

CS/SB 1318 — Spaceflight Entity Liability

by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Wright

The bill defines the term “crew” to have the same meaning as the federal definition, which defines the term as any employee of a licensee or transferee, or of a contractor or subcontractor of a licensee or transferee, who performs activities in the course of that employment directly relating to the launch, reentry, or other operation of or in a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle that carries human beings. The bill revises the definition of the term:

- “Spaceflight activities” to include activities that occur between launch and landing, not just during launch and reentry.
- “Spaceflight entity” to include entities authorized by the United States Government to conduct spaceflight activities. The bill also expands the term to include any manufacturer or supplier of spaceflight components, services, or vehicles by repealing the requirement that such manufacturer or supplier be those reviewed by the United States Federal Aviation Administration as part of issuing a license, permit, or authorization.

The bill extends immunity from liability to a spaceflight entity for an injury or death of spaceflight participant or crew resulting from a spaceflight activity, so long as a required warning statement was provided to and signed by the spaceflight participant or crew. The limited liability from immunity does not apply in certain circumstances.

Additionally, the bill modifies the liability language to require the spaceflight entity to have actual knowledge of an extraordinarily dangerous condition rather than actual knowledge or reasonable knowledge of a dangerous condition in order to be held responsible. Furthermore, the extraordinarily dangerous condition must be one that is not inherent in spaceflight activities.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 107-5

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

CS/CS/SB 1480 — Grants for Nonprofit Organization Safety

by Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development; Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee; and Senator Calatayud

The bill creates the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (program) in the Division of Emergency Management (division). The program's purpose is to award grants to nonprofit entities, including houses of worship and community centers, which are at high risk for violence and hate crimes and were deemed eligible for but did not receive funding from the United State Department of Homeland Security's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. The grant funds may be used for hiring security personnel, training security personnel and staff on threat awareness and emergency procedures, and to purchase and install:

- Security infrastructure;
- Perimeter lighting;
- Door hardening;
- Security camera systems;
- Perimeter fencing;
- Barriers and bollards;
- Blast-resistant film; and
- Shatter-resistant glass for windows.

An owner of a facility may apply for a grant for hardening or nonhardening security measures and a renter of a facility may apply for a grant for nonhardening security measures. The bill requires the division to adopt rules to administer the program, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding funds for hardening and nonhardening measures, the grant award process, and how to determine the need for funds to be awarded to an owner or renter of a facility that has been operational for at least 6 months or that has received a significant number of threats. If funds are appropriated to the program, the bill provides the program's minimum award is \$10,000 and the maximum award is \$150,000. The bill provides that the division may use up to 3 percent of funds appropriated for the program for administration. No funds were appropriated for the program in SB 2500 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

The program will be repealed as of January 1, 2028, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 118-0

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

CS/HB 7041 — Space Florida

by Commerce Committee; Regulatory Reform and Economic Development Subcommittee; and Reps. Sirois, Duggan, and others (CS/SB 7048 by Rules Committee and Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee)

The bill revises provisions governing Space Florida to increase collaboration on spaceport activities, enhance transparency measures on spaceport projects, and administratively transfer Space Florida from Enterprise Florida, Inc., to the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). Statutory cross-references are updated to reflect the change in the managing agency. Additional compliance provisions relating to transparency, auditing, and reporting with specific deadlines are established for Space Florida. Results of Space Florida's accomplishments and activities and progress towards the spaceport's master plan and goals are to be incorporated into the DEO's annual report. Space Florida will be subject to evaluation of its effectiveness by the Office of Program and Policy Analysis every 3 years, similar to other public-private partnerships.

The bill creates an independent Space Florida board of directors. The 12-member board consists of the Governor, who shall serve ex officio, or who may appoint a designee, to serve as the chair and a voting member of the board, the Secretary of Transportation or his or her designee, eight members appointed by the Governor and subject to Senate confirmation, one member appointed by the Senate President, and one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Of these board members, three gubernatorial appointees are identified as ex officio, nonvoting members, representing the Jacksonville Aviation Authority, the Titusville-Cocoa Airport Authority, and a port district or authority. The bill establishes membership and appointment criteria and term lengths, prohibits compensation, provides per diem and travel limits, allows electronic meetings, and provides quorum requirements. The DEO will conduct training for newly appointed board members.

The bill directs Space Florida to:

- Collaborate, partner, and solicit input from entities who have an interest or stake in the aerospace industry, the spaceport, the spaceport territory, and space exploration.
- Make certain notifications to the Department of Transportation when constructing or maintaining roads within the spaceport territory.
- Include additional economic data in the Space Florida annual report.
- Explain certain travel and entertainment expenditures and address recent audit findings.
- Assess contracts for services by including provisions requiring an independent auditor report of their effectiveness periodically and at the end of the contract.
- Complete a risk-based compliance assessment every 3 years of all internal contracts.

The bill prohibits Space Florida from endorsing any political candidates or making any political campaign donations.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 114-0

This summary is provided for information only and does not represent the opinion of any Senator, Senate Officer, or Senate Office.