

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to ad valorem taxes; amending  
3           s. 196.081, F.S.; providing an exemption from  
4           taxation for the homestead of the surviving  
5           spouse of a veteran who was killed while on  
6           active duty; providing an effective date.

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8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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10           Section 1. Section 196.081, Florida Statutes, is  
11 amended to read:

12           196.081 Exemption for certain permanently and totally  
13 disabled veterans and for surviving spouses of veterans.--

14           (1) Any real estate that is owned and used ~~and owned~~  
15 as a homestead by a veteran who was honorably discharged with  
16 a service-connected total and permanent disability and for  
17 whom a letter from the United States Government or United  
18 States Department of Veterans Affairs or its predecessor has  
19 been issued certifying that the veteran is totally and  
20 permanently disabled is exempt from taxation, if ~~provided~~ the  
21 veteran is a permanent resident of this ~~the~~ state on January 1  
22 of the tax year for which exemption is being claimed or was a  
23 permanent resident of this state on January 1 of the year the  
24 veteran died.

25           (2) The production by a veteran or the spouse or  
26 surviving spouse of a letter of total and permanent disability  
27 from the United States Government or United States Department  
28 of Veterans Affairs or its predecessor before the property  
29 appraiser of the county in which property of the veteran lies  
30 is ~~shall be~~ prima facie evidence of the fact that the veteran  
31 or the surviving spouse is entitled to the ~~such~~ exemption.

1           (3) ~~If in the event~~ the totally and permanently  
 2 disabled veteran predeceases his or her spouse and if, upon  
 3 the death of the veteran, the spouse holds the legal or  
 4 beneficial title to the homestead and permanently resides  
 5 thereon as specified in s. 196.031, the exemption from  
 6 taxation carries ~~shall carry~~ over to the benefit of the  
 7 veteran's spouse until such time as he or she remarries or  
 8 sells or otherwise disposes of the property. If the spouse  
 9 sells the property, an exemption not to exceed the amount  
 10 granted from the most recent ad valorem tax roll may be  
 11 transferred to his or her new residence, as long as it is used  
 12 as his or her primary residence and he or she does not  
 13 remarry.

14           (4)(a) Any real estate that is owned and used as a  
 15 homestead by the surviving spouse of a veteran who died from  
 16 service-connected causes while on active duty as a member of  
 17 the United States Armed Forces and for whom a letter from the  
 18 United States Government or United States Department of  
 19 Veterans Affairs or its predecessor has been issued certifying  
 20 that the veteran who died from service-connected causes while  
 21 on active duty is exempt from taxation if the veteran was a  
 22 permanent resident of this state on January 1 of the year in  
 23 which the veteran died.

24           (b) The production by the surviving spouse of a letter  
 25 that was issued as required under paragraph (a) and that  
 26 attests the veteran's death while on active duty is prima  
 27 facie evidence of the fact that the surviving spouse is  
 28 entitled to an exemption under paragraph (a).

29           (c) The tax exemption that applies under paragraph (a)  
 30 to the surviving spouse carries over to the benefit of the  
 31 veteran's surviving spouse as long as the spouse holds the

1 legal or beneficial title to the homestead, permanently  
2 resides thereon as specified in s. 196.031, and does not  
3 remarry. If the surviving spouse sells the property, an  
4 exemption not to exceed the amount granted from the most  
5 recent ad valorem tax roll may be transferred to his or her  
6 new residence as long as it is used as his or her primary  
7 residence and he or she does not remarry.

8 Section 2. This act shall take effect January 1, 1998.

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