Florida House of Representatives - 1999

HB 1607

By Representatives Starks, Brummer, Sublette, Feeney, Johnson and Posey

1	A bill to be entitled
2	An act relating to the City of Orlando, Orange
3	County, relating to the pension fund of the
4	fire department of the city; amending chapter
5	23444, Laws of Florida, 1945, as amended;
6	expanding the definition of issue and child to
7	include full-time students under the age of 26
8	and physically and/or mentally handicapped
9	children regardless of age with the additional
10	cost thereof being borne by the members;
11	providing benefits to dependent parents, to
12	allow for multiple designated beneficiaries and
13	providing for the return of deductions to the
14	estate of a deceased member without
15	beneficiaries with the additional actuarial
16	cost thereof being borne by the members;
17	providing an additional cost-of-living increase
18	for members and beneficiaries with the
19	additional actuarial cost thereof being borne
20	by the members; providing for a deferred
21	retirement option plan as an improvement to
22	present pension benefits with the additional
23	cost thereof being borne by the members;
24	providing for employer pick up of member
25	contributions; providing an effective date.
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27	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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29	Section 1. Section 2 of chapter 23444, Laws of
30	Florida, 1945, as amended, by chapter 72-573, Laws of Florida,
31	is amended to read:
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Section 2. (1) Members of said Fire Department shall 1 2 be construed as including all officers and firefighters 3 firemen and firewomen regularly employed in said department, and whose employment shall be regular and continuous and not 4 5 of a temporary character, provided, however, the secretaries, stenographers, and switchboard operators shall not be covered 6 7 by the provisions of this act. For the purposes of this act 8 the term "widow" shall include widower; reference to the 9 masculine pronoun shall include the feminine and vice versa; the term "issue" shall include a member's natural and adopted 10 children as well as children in gestation. 11 12 (2) After the effective date of this act, and 13 notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this act or this 14 plan, and further notwithstanding any requirement of the act 15 or the plan that a child or issue be under the age of 18, the 16 term "issue" or "child" shall include: children that are 17 full-time students under the age of 26; and, physically and/or mentally handicapped children for their natural lives. A 18 19 physically and/or mentally handicapped child includes children 20 primarily dependent upon the member or retiree due to a mental or physical condition which requires, or otherwise would have 21 22 required, the member or retiree to provide primary support. Any actuarially determined additional cost resulting from 23 24 including full-time students and handicapped children within the definition of issue shall be borne by the members of the 25 26 firefighters pension plan. 27 Section 3. Section 13 of chapter 23444, Laws of 28 Florida, 1945, as amended, by chapter 74-556, Laws of Florida, is amended to read: 29 30 Section 13. (1) If a deceased member of the said fire department, active or retired, shall leave no spouse widow 31 2

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surviving him or her and shall not leave surviving him or her 1 2 a child or children in being and his or her issue and under 3 the age of 18 eighteen (18) years, but shall leave a parent or parents mother surviving him or her who are is entirely 4 5 dependent upon said member for support, his or her parent or б parents mother shall receive the same pension to which his or 7 her spouse widow would have been entitled, unless and until 8 such parent or parents become mother becomes self-supporting or remarries. In the event the parents are no longer married, 9 the pension shall be divided and paid, on a per capita basis, 10 11 to each parent; should one parent become self-supporting, 12 remarry, or die, the entire amount of the pension shall be 13 paid to the other parent. 14 (2) If said deceased member shall not have received

15 any moneys monies under section 12 or section 18 of this 16 pension act, as amended, and shall leave no surviving widow or widower, child under the age of 18 eighteen (18) years or 17 dependent <u>parent</u> or parents mother, then one-half(1/2) of the 18 19 amount that has been deducted from said member's salary under 20 this act up to the effective date of section 3 of chapter 72-633, Laws of Florida, Special Acts of 1972 and all of said 21 deductions made thereafter shall be paid that the certain 22 individual or individuals who has been previously designated 23 by said deceased member. Such designation shall be in writing 24 25 and shall be filed with the secretary of the pension board; it 26 shall designate a choice of one or more persons, named 27 sequentially or jointly as beneficiaries in the event of the 28 member or retiree's death; said designations may be revoked by the member or retiree filing a new written designation with 29 the secretary of the pension board. indicate only one (1) 30 31 individual but shall be changed upon the written request of

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the member. In the event the deceased member shall not have 1 2 designated an individual or individuals to receive the 3 aforesaid deductions, or in the event the said designated individual or individuals shall predecease said member or 4 5 shall die within 30 thirty (30) days of the date of death of б the said member, then the aforesaid deductions shall be paid 7 to the deceased member's estate. remain with and become the 8 property of the pension fund and any others claiming by, 9 through, under of against said member or designated individual shall have no rights under this act. 10 11 (3) Any actuarially determined additional cost 12 resulting from amendments to this section extending benefits 13 to dependent parents in subsection (1) and providing for 14 multiple beneficiaries and deductions paid to the estate in the absence of designated beneficiaries in subsection (2), 15 16 shall be borne by the members of the firefighters' pension 17 plan. Section 4. Section 19 of chapter 23444, Laws of 18 19 Florida, as created by chapter 88-518, Laws of Florida, is 20 amended to read: Section 19. (1) After the effective date of this act, 21 22 Any member of the Orlando Fire Department who, on or after July 7, 1988, and prior to the effective date of this act, 23 24 retired retires prior to age 62 with 25 or more years of credited service shall receive a triennial cost-of-living 25 26 increase of 5 percent compound starting 3 years after 27 retirement and ending with the last triennial anniversary of 28 retirement prior to age 65. Any actuarially determined 29 additional cost resulting from this additional benefit shall 30 be borne by the members of the firefighters pension plan. 31

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(2) On or after the effective date of this act, any 1 2 member of the Orlando Fire Department who retires, or in the event of his death, his beneficiaries, shall receive an annual 3 cost-of-living increase of 2 percent compound starting on the 4 5 first anniversary of the receipt of benefits under this plan and on each subsequent anniversary date of the receipt of 6 7 benefits under this plan. The anniversary date for 8 beneficiaries receiving a pension as a result of the death of 9 a retiree who was receiving a benefit at the time of his death shall be the date on which the retiree began to receive his 10 11 pension. The benefit provided for in subsection (1), with the 12 additional cost thereof being borne by the members, shall not 13 become effective and shall be of no force and effect unless and until approved by a majority of the members of the 14 firefighters pension plan at an election conducted by the 15 16 Orlando Firefighters Pension Board within 90 days after the effective date of this act. 17 (3) Any actuarially determined additional cost 18 19 resulting from the benefits in this section shall be borne by 20 members of the firefighters' pension plan. Section 5. A new section 21 is added to chapter 23444, 21 22 Laws of Florida, as amended, to read: Section 21. (1) DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN. -- The 23 24 Deferred Retirement Option Plan, hereinafter referred to as 25 the DROP, allows any member who has elected to participate in 26 the DROP, hereinafter referred to as a DROP participant, to 27 receive a lump-sum payment, or other payment, in addition to a 28 monthly pension, upon termination of employment. No benefits shall be paid under this section unless the DROP participant 29 has terminated employment. 30 31

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1 (2) DROP ELIGIBILITY.--Any member may elect to 2 participate in the DROP following the date upon which the 3 member first becomes eligible for a monthly pension as 4 provided for in section 12, hereinafter referred to in this 5 section as a "service retirement pension." A member may б participate in the DROP only once. 7 (3) DROP PARTICIPATION. --8 (a) An eligible member may participate in the DROP for 9 a period not to exceed a maximum of 36 months. Notwithstanding, DROP participation may not continue beyond 10 11 the date when the member's combined years of credited service 12 and time in the DROP equals 360 months, except for those 13 member's entering the DROP in the window period set forth in subsection (13). 14 15 (b) A member may apply to participate in the DROP by 16 submitting an application to the board of trustees, which shall include the following: 17 1. A written election to participate in the DROP. 18 2. Selection of the DROP participation and termination 19 20 dates, that satisfy the limitation stated in subsection (2) and paragraph (a). Such termination date shall be in a binding 21 22 letter of resignation with the city, establishing a deferred 23 termination date. 24 3. A properly completed DROP application for a service 25 retirement pension. 26 4. A properly completed designation of named 27 beneficiaries in the event the member dies while participating 28 in the DROP. 29 5. Any other information as may be required by the 30 board of trustees. 31

1	(c) A DROP participant may increase or decrease the
2	original DROP participation period subject to the maximum
3	limitation stated in paragraph (a). A 30-day written notice to
4	the board of trustees is required for this election.
5	(d) The DROP participant shall be a retiree under the
6	provisions of the pension plan. However, participation in the
7	DROP does not alter the DROP participant's employment status
8	and such DROP participant shall not terminate employment until
9	the DROP participant's deferred resignation is effective and
10	separation from employment occurs.
11	(e) A DROP participant shall not accrue additional
12	credited service under the pension plan after the effective
13	date of DROP participation, except as provided for in
14	paragraph (10)(d) and subsection (12).
15	(4) BENEFITS PAYABLE UNDER THE DROP
16	(a) Effective with the date of DROP participation, the
17	DROP participant's initial monthly service retirement pension,
18	including credited service and average monthly salary, shall
19	be determined and fixed. Such service retirement pension,
20	together with annual cost-of-living adjustments thereto, and
21	earnings shall be credited to the DROP participant's DROP
22	account no less than monthly. Such earnings shall be credited
23	as provided in subsection (7).
24	(b) The effective date of DROP participation for a
25	participant who has elected to receive benefits under the
26	pension plan shall be the first day of the month selected by
27	the member to begin retirement under the pension plan and
28	participation in the DROP.
29	(c) The service retirement pension and earnings
30	thereon shall be credited to the DROP participant's DROP
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account periodically, as pension benefit payments would have 1 2 otherwise been made. (5) DROP TYPES.--A member eligible for a service 3 4 retirement pension may elect a Forward DROP, a Back DROP, or a 5 Combined DROP. 6 (a) Forward DROP.--Under a Forward DROP a member may 7 retire, deferring receipt of the service retirement pension 8 while continuing employment with the city. In that case, the 9 deferred monthly service retirement pension shall be credited to the DROP participant's DROP account on behalf of the DROP 10 11 participant, as provided in subsection (4), for the specified 12 period of the DROP participation, as provided in subsection 13 (3). Upon termination of employment, the DROP participant shall receive the balance of his DROP account and begin to 14 receive the monthly service retirement pension. 15 16 1. A DROP participant remains an employee and receives 17 all the benefits of being an employee during the DROP participation period. A DROP participant shall be subject to 18 19 termination of employment during the DROP participation period 20 to the same extent as he was prior to participating in the 21 DROP. 22 2. Effective with the start date of a DROP participant's Forward DROP participation, a member's 23 24 contribution and the normal cost contribution to the pension 25 fund by the city, on behalf of the member, shall cease. 26 (b) Back DROP.--Under a Back DROP a member may retire 27 with a retroactive date of retirement. A member may not 28 select a retroactive retirement date earlier than the date 29 upon which the member first became eligible for a service retirement pension, and in no event shall the retroactive date 30 of retirement be more than 36 months prior to the date of Back 31 8

DROP election. The monthly service retirement pension shall 1 2 be determined as of the retroactive retirement date. The member shall then be credited with an account balance in his 3 DROP account that is equal to the account balance he would 4 5 have had if he had timely elected a Forward DROP under 6 paragraph (a) on the retroactive retirement date. Upon 7 termination of employment the DROP participant shall receive 8 the balance of his DROP account and shall begin to receive the monthly service retirement pension adjusted to reflect the 9 10 retroactive retirement date. 11 (c) Combined DROP.--Under a Combined DROP a member may 12 elect a Back DROP for a period of less than 36 months and a 13 consecutive Forward DROP period, provided the sum of the Back 14 DROP and Forward DROP periods does not exceed 36 months. The Back DROP portion of the Combined DROP shall be calculated as 15 set forth in paragraph (b), and the Forward DROP portion shall 16 be calculated as set forth in paragraph (a). Upon termination 17 of employment, the DROP participant shall receive the balance 18 of his DROP account and shall begin to receive the monthly 19 20 service retirement pension adjusted to reflect the retroactive 21 retirement date. 22 (6) DROP ACCOUNTS.--(a) Individual DROP accounts shall be established to 23 24 account for each DROP participant's accrued DROP benefits, but 25 there shall be no segregation of funds for any DROP 26 participant. The accounting shall record the credited monthly 27 service retirement pension, as determined in subsection (5), 28 including cost-of-living increases, as provided for in section 29 19(2). In the case of a Back DROP, the amount of a member's contributions made during the Back DROP period shall be 30 31

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credited to the DROP participant's DROP account. The DROP 1 2 account shall be adjusted as provided in subsection (7). 3 (b) Upon request, the board of trustees shall provide 4 to any member information showing the full value of any 5 anticipated DROP benefits, as well as how same would be б calculated, in the event such DROP is elected. 7 (7) DROP BENEFITS EARNINGS AND REPORTING.--8 (a) A DROP participant's DROP account shall accrue 9 earnings at the actual rate of investment return realized by the pension fund and with the same frequency. 10 11 (b) A DROP account shall be adjusted to reflect 12 earnings until such time as the DROP account is distributed in 13 full to the DROP participant or his beneficiaries. 14 (c) The board of trustees shall report to each DROP 15 participant at least annually, or upon request of the DROP 16 participant, accrued DROP benefits in his DROP account; the 17 report shall also reflect investment performance, contributions, and any other items that materially affected 18 19 the DROP benefit. 20 (8) COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT.--A DROP participant's monthly service retirement pension shall be increased as 21 22 provided for in section 19(2). 23 (9) BENEFITS PAYABLE UPON TERMINATION OF DROP.--Upon 24 the DROP participant's termination of employment, for any reason, whether by resignation, discharge, disability, or 25 26 death, the monthly service retirement pension and the balance 27 of the DROP account shall be paid to the DROP participant, or 28 if deceased, the DROP participant's beneficiaries, as provided 29 herein. 30 (10) PAYMENT CONDITIONS AND OPTIONS.--Upon the DROP 31 participant's termination of employment, for any reason, 10

whether by resignation, discharge, disability, or death, the 1 2 board of trustees shall distribute the balance of DROP 3 participant's DROP account, subject to the following 4 provisions: 5 (a) The board of trustees shall receive verification б from the city that such DROP participant has terminated 7 employment. 8 (b) Following the termination of employment, the DROP 9 participant, or if deceased, such DROP participant's beneficiaries, shall elect on forms provided by the board of 10 trustees to receive payment of the balance of the DROP account 11 12 in accordance with one of the options listed below. For a 13 DROP participant or beneficiaries who fail to elect a method of payment within 60 days of termination of the DROP, the 14 15 board of trustees shall pay the balance of the DROP account in 16 one lump sum as provided in subparagraph 1. 1. Lump sum. -- The balance of the DROP account, less 17 taxes remitted to the Internal Revenue Service, if any, shall 18 19 be paid to the DROP participant or beneficiaries. 20 2. Direct rollover.--The balance of the DROP account shall be paid directly to the custodian of an eligible 21 retirement plan as defined in s. 402(c)(8)(B) of the Internal 22 Revenue Code. However, in the case of an eligible rollover 23 distribution to the widow or widower as a beneficiary, an 24 eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account 25 26 or an individual retirement annuity as described in s. 402(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code. 27 28 3. Partial lump sum. -- A portion of the balance of the DROP account shall be paid to the DROP participant or 29 30 beneficiaries, less taxes remitted to the Internal Revenue Service, if any, and the remaining balance of the DROP account 31

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shall be transferred directly to the custodian of an eligible 1 retirement plan as defined in s. 402(c)(8)(B) of the Internal 2 Revenue Code. However, in the case of an eligible rollover 3 distribution to the widow or widower as a beneficiary, an 4 5 eligible retirement plan is an individual retirement account 6 or an individual retirement annuity as described in s. 7 402(c)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code. The proportions shall 8 be specified by the DROP participant or beneficiaries. 9 4. Other methods. -- The balance of the DROP account shall be paid by a method that is in compliance with the 10 Internal Revenue Code and as adopted by the board of trustees. 11 12 (c) The form of payment selected by the DROP 13 participant or beneficiaries complies with the minimum 14 distribution requirements of the Internal Revenue Code. 15 (d) A DROP participant who fails to terminate 16 employment shall be deemed not to be retired and the DROP election shall be null and void. Pension plan membership shall 17 be reestablished retroactively to the date of the commencement 18 19 of the DROP. As provided for in subparagraph (5)(a)2., city 20 and member contributions shall cease during a Forward DROP participation period, the city and the member shall pay into 21 22 the pension fund those contributions that would have been required during the period the member participated in a 23 24 Forward DROP or the Forward DROP portion of a Combined DROP, plus the actual rate of investment return realized by the 25 26 pension fund during said period; such payment by the member 27 shall be a condition for the subsequent receipt of any benefit 28 under the pension plan. Such DROP participant shall be prohibited from again electing participation in the DROP, as 29 provided for in subsection (2). 30

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CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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1	(11) RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE SUBSIDYA DROP
2	participant is not eligible to apply for the retiree health
3	insurance subsidy payment until such participant has
4	terminated employment and participation in the DROP.
5	(12) DISABILITYIn the event a DROP participant
6	shall become permanently and totally disabled during the DROP
7	participation period, said DROP participant may apply for a
8	disability pension as provided for in section 7 or section 9,
9	as applicable. In the event a disability pension is granted,
10	the DROP participant's election shall be null and void.
11	Pension plan membership shall be reestablished retroactively
12	to the date of the commencement of the DROP. As provided for
13	in subparagraph (5)(a)2., city and member contributions shall
14	cease during a Forward DROP participation period, the city and
15	the member shall pay into the pension fund those contributions
16	that would have been required during the period the member
17	participated in a Forward DROP or the Forward DROP portion of
18	a Combined DROP, plus the actual rate of investment return
19	realized by the pension fund during said period; such payment
20	by the member shall be a condition for receiving the
21	disability pension. Such DROP participant shall be prohibited
22	from again electing participation in the DROP, as provided for
23	in subsection (2).
24	(13) ELIGIBILITY EXCEPTIONS
25	(a) A one-time window period shall occur for 60 days
26	from the effective date of the DROP as provided in subsection
27	<u>(17).</u>
28	(b) During the window period and subject to the other
29	eligibility conditions expressed herein, a member with more
30	than 324 months of credited service may elect to enter the
31	DROP and not be subject to the combined years of credited
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service and DROP participation limitation of 360 months. Said 1 2 member is subject to the maximum DROP participation period of 3 36 months. 4 (c) A member with more than 324 months of credited 5 service as of the effective date of DROP who does not elect to 6 participate in the DROP, as set forth above, during this 7 one-time window period shall forfeit the right to deviate from 8 the conditions for participation in the DROP set forth in 9 subsection (3). 10 (14) DEATH OF A DROP PARTICIPANT.--(a) Upon the death of a DROP participant, the named 11 12 DROP beneficiaries shall be entitled to apply for and receive 13 the balance of the DROP participant's DROP account as provided 14 in subsections (9) and (10). DROP payments to a beneficiary 15 shall be in addition to any other retirement benefits payable 16 to the beneficiary. (b) The monthly service retirement pension accrued to 17 the DROP account during the month of the DROP participant's 18 19 death shall be the final monthly service retirement pension 20 benefit credited for such DROP participant. (c) Eligibility to participate in the DROP terminates 21 upon death of the DROP participant. If the DROP participant 22 dies on or after the effective date of enrollment in the DROP, 23 24 but prior to the first monthly service retirement pension benefit being credited to the DROP, pension plan benefits 25 26 shall be paid in accordance with applicable provisions of this 27 pension plan. 28 (d) A DROP participant's beneficiaries shall not be 29 eligible to receive survivor benefits as provided in sections 30 8 and 10. 31

1	(15) A DROP participant shall not be deemed to have
2	been reemployed after retirement as that term is used
3	elsewhere in the plan.
4	(16) Any actuarially determined additional cost
5	resulting from the benefits in this section shall be borne by
6	the members of the pension plan. Further, the members of the
7	pension plan will pay annually any actuarially determined
8	ancillary costs resulting from the benefits in this section.
9	(17) This section shall take effect contingent upon
10	the city or the board of trustees receiving a favorable
11	determination letter and a favorable private letter ruling,
12	hereinafter referred to as favorable letters, from the
13	Internal Revenue Service. The city or the board of trustees
14	shall request from the Internal Revenue Service, within 90
15	days of the passage of this act:
16	(a) A written determination letter stating that the
17	pension plan, as amended to include the DROP, continues to be
18	a qualified pension plan; and
19	(b) A private letter ruling stating:
20	1. That the pension plan, as amended to include the
21	DROP, is not a "defined contribution plan" as defined in ss.
22	414(i) and 415(k)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code, is not
23	subject to the separate limitations contained within s. 415(c)
24	and (e) of the Internal Revenue Code, and is not a "hybrid
25	plan" as defined in s. 414(k) of the Internal Revenue Code;
26	2. That the pension plan, as amended to include the
27	DROP, is not a "cash or deferred arrangement" within the
28	meaning of s. 401(k) of the Internal Revenue Code; and
29	3. That the monthly retirement benefits paid into the
30	DROP are not deemed to be constructive receipt of income under
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s. 402(a) of the Internal Revenue Code and shall not be 1 2 taxable until actual distribution to the retiree. (c) In the event favorable letters are not received, 3 4 this section shall not take effect. Section 6. Section 22 of chapter 23444, Laws of 5 б Florida, 1945, as amended, is amended to read: 7 Section 22. Any benefits paid under the provisions of this act for any child shall, except as provided in section 8 2(1), cease when and if such child dies or is, or becomes self 9 10 supporting, marries or reaches the age of 18 eighteen (18) 11 years. Section 7. A new section 24 is added to chapter 23444, 12 13 Laws of Florida, 1945, as amended, to read: 14 Section 24. (1) Upon implementation, the city shall, 15 solely for the purpose of compliance with s. 414(h) of the 16 Internal Revenue Code, pick up, for the purposes specified in 17 that section, member contributions required by the act for all salary earned by the member after implementation. Member 18 19 contributions picked up under the provisions of this section 20 shall be treated as city contributions for purposes of determining income tax obligations under the Internal Revenue 21 Code; however, such picked up member contributions shall be 22 included in the determination of the member's gross annual 23 24 salary for all other purposes under federal and state laws. 25 (2) Members' contributions picked up under this 26 section shall continue to be designated member contributions 27 for all purposes of the act and shall be considered as part of 28 the member's salary for purposes of determining the amount of the member's contributions. The provisions of this section 29 are mandatory, and the member shall have no option concerning 30 31

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1	the pick up or to receive the contributed amounts directly
2	instead of having them paid by the city to the pension fund.
3	(3) Implementation occurs upon authorization by the
4	board of trustees following receipt of a favorable letter of
5	determination as to the qualified plan status of the fund. In
6	no event may implementation occur other than at the beginning
7	of a pay period.
8	Section 8. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
9	law.
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