

By the Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs, Base Protection, and Spaceports; and Senators Fasano, Clary, Crist, Siplin, Lynn, Wasserman Schultz and Haridopolos

301-1205A-04

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to military families; amending  
3           s. 295.01, F.S.; revising certain requirements  
4           relating to scholarships for children of  
5           deceased veterans; amending s. 445.007, F.S.;  
6           providing for the appointment of a military  
7           representative to certain regional workforce  
8           boards; amending s. 464.009, F.S.; providing  
9           for licensure by endorsement of certain nurses  
10          licensed in another state that is a member of  
11          the Nurse Licensure Compact; amending s.  
12          464.022, F.S.; providing that certain nurses  
13          relocating to this state may perform nursing  
14          services for a period of 120 days after  
15          submitting application for licensure; amending  
16          s. 1002.39, F.S.; revising eligibility  
17          requirements for military dependents applying  
18          for a John M. McKay Scholarship; amending s.  
19          1003.05, F.S.; directing the Department of  
20          Education to assist in the development of  
21          memoranda of agreement between school districts  
22          and military installations; creating s.  
23          1008.221, F.S.; providing for alternate  
24          assessments for the grade 10 FCAT for certain  
25          military dependents; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.;  
26          classifying certain liaison officers and their  
27          spouses and dependent children as residents for  
28          tuition purposes; directing Workforce Florida,  
29          Inc., to establish an employment advocacy and  
30          assistance program targeting military spouses  
31          and dependents; directing the Florida Housing

1 Finance Corporation to assess the housing needs  
2 of Florida's military families; requiring a  
3 report; providing an effective date.  
4

5 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
6

7 Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 295.01, Florida  
8 Statutes, is amended to read:

9 295.01 Children of deceased or disabled veterans;  
10 education.--

11 (1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the  
12 state to provide educational opportunity at state expense for  
13 dependent children either of whose parents was a resident of  
14 the state at the time such parent entered the Armed Forces  
15 and:

16 (a) Died while on active duty as a result of  
17 service-connected injuries, disease, or disability;~~in that~~  
18 ~~service or from injuries sustained or disease contracted~~  
19 ~~during a period of wartime service as defined in s. 1.01(14)~~  
20 ~~or has died since or may hereafter die from diseases or~~  
21 ~~disability resulting from such war service, or~~

22 (b) Has been:

23 1. Determined by the United States Department of  
24 Veterans Affairs or its predecessor to have a  
25 service-connected 100-percent total and permanent disability  
26 rating for compensation;7

27 2. Determined to have a service-connected total and  
28 permanent disability rating of 100 percent and is in receipt  
29 of disability retirement pay from any branch of the United  
30 States Armed Services;7or  
31

1           3. Issued a valid identification card by the  
2 Department of Veterans' Affairs in accordance with s. 295.17,  
3  
4 when the parents of such children have been bona fide  
5 residents of the state for 5 years next preceding their  
6 application for the benefits hereof, and subject to the rules,  
7 restrictions, and limitations hereof.

8           Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 445.007, Florida  
9 Statutes, is amended to read:

10           445.007 Regional workforce boards; exemption from  
11 public meetings law.--

12           (1) One regional workforce board shall be appointed in  
13 each designated service delivery area and shall serve as the  
14 local workforce investment board pursuant to Pub. L. No.  
15 105-220. The membership of the board shall be consistent with  
16 Pub. L. No. 105-220, Title I, s. 117(b), and contain one  
17 representative from a nonpublic postsecondary educational  
18 institution that is an authorized individual training account  
19 provider within the region and confers certificates and  
20 diplomas, one representative from a nonpublic postsecondary  
21 educational institution that is an authorized individual  
22 training account provider within the region and confers  
23 degrees, and three representatives of organized labor. The  
24 board shall include one representative from a military  
25 installation if a military installation is located within the  
26 region. Individuals serving as members of regional workforce  
27 development boards or local WAGES coalitions, as of June 30,  
28 2000, are eligible for appointment to regional workforce  
29 boards, pursuant to this section. It is the intent of the  
30 Legislature that, whenever possible and to the greatest extent  
31 practicable, membership of a regional workforce board include

1 persons who are current or former recipients of welfare  
2 transition assistance as defined in s. 445.002(3) or workforce  
3 services as provided in s. 445.009(1), or that such persons be  
4 included as ex officio members of the board or of committees  
5 organized by the board. The importance of minority and gender  
6 representation shall be considered when making appointments to  
7 the board. If the regional workforce board enters into a  
8 contract with an organization or individual represented on the  
9 board of directors, the contract must be approved by a  
10 two-thirds vote of the entire board, and the board member who  
11 could benefit financially from the transaction must abstain  
12 from voting on the contract. A board member must disclose any  
13 such conflict in a manner that is consistent with the  
14 procedures outlined in s. 112.3143.

15 Section 3. Present subsections (3), (4), and (5) of  
16 section 464.009, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as  
17 subsections (4), (5), and (6), respectively, and a new  
18 subsection (3) is added to that section to read:

19 464.009 Licensure by endorsement.--

20 (3) An applicant for licensure by endorsement who is  
21 relocating to this state pursuant to his or her  
22 military-connected spouse's official military orders and who  
23 is licensed in another state that is a member of the Nurse  
24 Licensure Compact shall be deemed to have satisfied the  
25 requirements of subsection (1) and shall be issued a license  
26 by endorsement upon submission of the appropriate application  
27 and fees and completion of the criminal background check  
28 required under subsection (4).

29 Section 4. Subsection (8) of section 464.022, Florida  
30 Statutes, is amended to read:

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1           464.022 Exceptions.--No provision of this part shall  
2 be construed to prohibit:

3           (8) Any nurse currently licensed in another state or  
4 territory of the United States from performing nursing  
5 services in this state for a period of 60 days after  
6 furnishing to the employer satisfactory evidence of current  
7 licensure in another state or territory and having submitted  
8 proper application and fees to the board for licensure prior  
9 to employment. If the nurse licensed in another state or  
10 territory is relocating to this state pursuant to his or her  
11 military-connected spouse's official military orders, this  
12 period shall be 120 days after furnishing to the employer  
13 satisfactory evidence of current licensure in another state or  
14 territory and having submitted proper application and fees to  
15 the board for licensure prior to employment. The board may  
16 extend this time for administrative purposes when necessary.

17           Section 5. Subsection (2) of section 1002.39, Florida  
18 Statutes, is amended to read:

19           1002.39 The John M. McKay Scholarships for Students  
20 with Disabilities Program.--There is established a program  
21 that is separate and distinct from the Opportunity Scholarship  
22 Program and is named the John M. McKay Scholarships for  
23 Students with Disabilities Program, pursuant to this section.

24           (2) SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.--The parent of a public  
25 school student with a disability who is dissatisfied with the  
26 student's progress may request and receive from the state a  
27 John M. McKay Scholarship for the child to enroll in and  
28 attend a private school in accordance with this section if:

29           (a) By assigned school attendance area or by special  
30 assignment, the student has spent the prior school year in  
31 attendance at a Florida public school. Prior school year in

1 attendance means that the student was enrolled and reported by  
2 a school district for funding during the preceding October and  
3 February Florida Education Finance Program surveys in  
4 kindergarten through grade 12. However, this paragraph does  
5 not apply to a dependent child of a member of the United  
6 States Armed Forces who transfers to a school in this state  
7 from out of state or from a foreign country pursuant to a  
8 parent's permanent change of station orders.

9 (b) The parent has obtained acceptance for admission  
10 of the student to a private school that is eligible for the  
11 program under subsection (4) and has notified the school  
12 district of the request for a scholarship at least 60 days  
13 prior to the date of the first scholarship payment. The  
14 parental notification must be through a communication directly  
15 to the district or through the Department of Education to the  
16 district in a manner that creates a written or electronic  
17 record of the notification and the date of receipt of the  
18 notification.

19  
20 This section does not apply to a student who is enrolled in a  
21 school operating for the purpose of providing educational  
22 services to youth in Department of Juvenile Justice commitment  
23 programs. For purposes of continuity of educational choice,  
24 the scholarship shall remain in force until the student  
25 returns to a public school or graduates from high school.  
26 However, at any time, the student's parent may remove the  
27 student from the private school and place the student in  
28 another private school that is eligible for the program under  
29 subsection (4) or in a public school as provided in subsection  
30 (3).

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1           Section 6. Subsection (2) of section 1003.05, Florida  
2 Statutes, is amended to read:

3           1003.05 Assistance to transitioning students from  
4 military families.--

5           (2) The Department of Education shall facilitate the  
6 development and implementation of memoranda of agreement  
7 between school districts and military installations which  
8 address strategies for assisting military students in the  
9 transition to Florida schools.~~identify its efforts and~~  
10 ~~strategies for assisting military-connected students in~~  
11 ~~transitioning to the Florida school system, including the~~  
12 ~~identification of acceptable equivalence for curriculum and~~  
13 ~~graduation requirements, and report its findings to the~~  
14 ~~Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the~~  
15 ~~House of Representatives by October 1, 2003.~~

16           Section 7. Section 1008.221, Florida Statutes, is  
17 created to read:

18           1008.221 Dependent children of military personnel  
19 transferring to Florida schools; equivalencies for  
20 standardized tests.--A dependent child of a member of the  
21 United States Armed Forces who enters a public school at the  
22 12th grade from out of state or from a foreign country and  
23 provides satisfactory proof of attaining a score on an  
24 approved alternative assessment that is concordant to a  
25 passing score on the grade 10 FCAT shall satisfy the  
26 assessment requirement for a standard high school diploma as  
27 provided in s. 1003.43(5)(a). For purposes of this section,  
28 approved alternative assessments are the SAT and ACT.

29           Section 8. Paragraph (k) is added to subsection (10)  
30 of section 1009.21, Florida Statutes, to read:

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1           1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition  
2 purposes.--Students shall be classified as residents or  
3 nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in community  
4 colleges and state universities.

5           (10) The following persons shall be classified as  
6 residents for tuition purposes:

7           (k) Active duty members of a foreign nation's military  
8 who are serving as liaison officers and are residing or  
9 stationed in this state, and their spouses and dependent  
10 children, attending a community college or state university  
11 within 50 miles of the military establishment where the  
12 foreign liaison officer is stationed.

13           Section 9. (1) The Legislature finds that military  
14 families are faced with a variety of challenges, including  
15 frequent relocations, recurring deployments, lengthy periods  
16 of separation, and heightened anxiety and uncertainty during  
17 periods of conflict. A military spouse's ability to gain job  
18 skills and maintain a career contributes to the financial  
19 well-being of the family, spouse satisfaction with military  
20 life, and military retention and readiness. Military spouses  
21 are often required to terminate their employment in order to  
22 support their spouse's highly mobile military commitment. The  
23 unemployment rate for military spouses is approximately four  
24 times the civilian unemployment rate, and military spouse  
25 earnings are significantly lower than those of their  
26 comparably educated civilian peers. Recognizing the  
27 employment challenges faced by military spouses and the  
28 importance of military families to our communities and  
29 economy, the Legislature declares its intent to establish an  
30 employment advocacy and assistance program to serve Florida's  
31 military families.

1           (2) Workforce Florida, Inc., shall establish an  
2 employment advocacy and assistance program targeting military  
3 spouses and dependents. This program shall deliver employment  
4 assistance services through military family employment  
5 advocates colocated within selected one-stop career centers.  
6 Persons eligible for assistance through this program shall  
7 include spouses and dependents of active-duty military  
8 personnel, Florida National Guard members, and military  
9 reservists.

10           (3) Military family employment advocates are  
11 responsible for providing the following services and  
12 activities:

13           (a) Coordination of employment assistance services  
14 through military base family support centers, Florida's  
15 one-stop career centers, and veteran-support organizations.

16           (b) Training to one-stop career center managers and  
17 staff on the unique employment needs and skills of military  
18 family members.

19           (c) Promoting and marketing the benefits of employing  
20 military family members to prospective employers.

21           (d) Assisting employment-seeking military family  
22 members through job counseling, job search and placement  
23 services, the dissemination of information on educational and  
24 training programs, and the availability of support services.

25           (e) Other employment assistance services Workforce  
26 Florida, Inc., deems necessary.

27           (4) Workforce Florida, Inc., may enter into agreements  
28 with public and private entities to provide services  
29 authorized under this section.

30           Section 10. The Florida Housing Finance Corporation  
31 shall undertake an assessment of the needs of active duty

1 military personnel and their families living in Florida for  
2 affordable housing. The needs assessment shall provide  
3 information on the population characteristics of the service  
4 personnel and their families having total gross incomes of up  
5 to 80 percent of the local area's median income who are living  
6 off base, including, but not limited to, the number of  
7 households by family size, income, and current tenancy; the  
8 condition of existing housing; and the availability of  
9 homeowner and rental housing that is affordable to these  
10 service personnel and their families. The corporation shall  
11 report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the  
12 President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
13 Representatives, the Senate Minority Leader, and the House  
14 Minority Leader by December 31, 2004.

15 Section 11. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
16 law.

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19 SENATE SUMMARY

20 Provides assistance to military personnel, and families  
21 of military personnel, in a variety of issues, including  
22 professional licensure, educational opportunities,  
23 employment assistance, and housing availability. (See  
24 bill for details.)  
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