

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to adoption benefits; amending s. 110.152,
 3 F.S.; defining the term "qualifying adoptive parent";
 4 expanding the categories of persons who are eligible to be
 5 qualifying adoptive parents; providing that a qualifying
 6 adoptive parent who adopts a special-needs child or a
 7 child whose permanent custody has been awarded to the
 8 Department of Children and Family Services or to a
 9 Florida-licensed child-placing agency, other than a
 10 special-needs child, is eligible to receive a specified
 11 monetary benefit that is paid to the adoptive parent in
 12 equal monthly installments over a 1-year period; amending
 13 s. 110.15201, F.S.; authorizing the Department of
 14 Management Services to adopt rules to administer the
 15 adoption benefits program; providing an effective date.

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

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 19 Section 1. Section 110.152, Florida Statutes, is amended
 20 to read:

21 110.152 Adoption benefits for qualifying adoptive parents
 22 ~~state employees~~; parental leave.--

23 (1) As used in this section, the term "qualifying adoptive
 24 parent" means a full-time or part-time employee of:

25 (a) The state, including a full-time or part-time employee
 26 of the State University System;

27 (b) Any community college; or

28 (c) Any county school district, including teachers.

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29 ~~(2)-(1)~~(a) Any qualifying adoptive parent ~~full-time or~~
30 ~~part-time employee of the state who is paid from regular salary~~
31 ~~appropriations and~~ who adopts a special-needs child, as defined
32 in paragraph (b), is eligible to receive a monetary benefit in
33 the amount of \$10,000 per child, which is payable in equal
34 monthly installments over a 1-year period. Any qualifying
35 adoptive parent ~~employee of the state~~ who adopts a child whose
36 permanent custody has been awarded to the Department of Children
37 and Family Services or to a Florida-licensed child-placing
38 agency, other than a special-needs child as defined in paragraph
39 (b), shall be eligible to receive a monetary benefit in the
40 amount of \$5,000 per child, which is payable in equal monthly
41 installments over a 1-year period. Benefits paid under this
42 subsection to a part-time employee must be prorated based on the
43 employee's full-time-equivalency status at the time of applying
44 for the benefits.

45 (b) For purposes of this section, a "special-needs child"
46 is a child whose permanent custody has been awarded to the
47 Department of Children and Family Services or to a Florida-
48 licensed child-placing agency and who is not likely to be
49 adopted because he or she is:

- 50 1. Eight years of age or older.
- 51 2. A person with a developmental disability.
- 52 3. A person with a physical or emotional handicap.
- 53 4. Of a minority race or of a racially mixed heritage.
- 54 5. A member of a sibling group of any age, provided that
55 two or more members of a sibling group remain together for the
56 purposes of adoption.

57 ~~(3)-(2)~~ A qualifying adoptive parent ~~An employee of the~~
 58 ~~state~~ who adopts a special-needs child must apply to his or her
 59 agency head to obtain the monetary benefit provided in
 60 subsection (2) ~~(1)~~. Applications must be on forms approved by
 61 the department and must include a certified copy of the final
 62 order of adoption naming the applicant as the adoptive parent.

63 ~~(4)-(3)~~ Nothing in This section does not ~~shall~~ affect the
 64 right of any qualifying adoptive parent ~~state employee~~ who
 65 adopts a special-needs child to receive financial aid for
 66 adoption expenses under ~~pursuant to~~ s. 409.166 or any other
 67 statute that provides financial incentives for the adoption of
 68 children.

69 ~~(5)-(4)~~ Any qualifying adoptive parent ~~employee of the~~
 70 ~~state~~ who has a child placed in the custody of the adopting
 71 parent ~~employee~~ for adoption, and who continues to reside in the
 72 same household as the child placed for adoption, shall be
 73 granted parental leave for a period not to exceed 6 months as
 74 provided in s. 110.221.

75 Section 2. Section 110.15201, Florida Statutes, is amended
 76 to read:

77 110.15201 Adoption benefits for state employees;
 78 rulemaking authority.--The Department of Management Services may
 79 adopt rules to administer the provisions of this act. The ~~Such~~
 80 rules may provide for an application process such as, but not
 81 limited to, an open enrollment period during which qualifying
 82 adoptive parents ~~employees~~ may apply for monetary benefits as
 83 provided in s. 110.152~~(1)~~.

84 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.