

By Senator Wilson

33-31-07

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to adoption benefits; amending s. 110.152, F.S.; defining the term "qualifying adoptive parent"; expanding the categories of persons who are eligible to be qualifying adoptive parents; providing that a qualifying adoptive parent who adopts a special-needs child is eligible to receive a specified monetary benefit that is paid to the adoptive parent in equal monthly installments over a 1-year period; amending s. 110.15201, F.S.; authorizing the Department of Management Services to adopt rules to administer the adoption benefits program; providing an effective date.

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Any community college in the state; or

(c) Any county school district in the state, including teachers.

(2)(1)(a) Any qualifying adoptive parent ~~full-time or part-time employee of the state who is paid from regular~~

1 ~~salary appropriations and~~ who adopts a special-needs child, as
2 defined in paragraph (b), is eligible to receive a monetary
3 benefit in the amount of \$10,000 per child, which is payable
4 in equal monthly installments over a 1-year period. Any
5 qualifying adoptive parent ~~employee of the state~~ who adopts a
6 child whose permanent custody has been awarded to the
7 Department of Children and Family Services or to a
8 Florida-licensed child-placing agency, other than a
9 special-needs child as defined in paragraph (b), shall be
10 eligible to receive a monetary benefit in the amount of \$5,000
11 per child, which is payable in equal monthly installments over
12 a 1-year period. Benefits paid under this subsection to a
13 part-time employee must be prorated based on the employee's
14 full-time-equivalency status at the time of applying for the
15 benefits.

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

- 21 1. Eight years of age or older.
- 22 2. A person with a developmental disability.
- 23 3. A person with a physical or emotional handicap.
- 24 4. Of a minority race or of a racially mixed heritage.
- 25 5. A member of a sibling group of any age, provided
26 that two or more members of a sibling group remain together
27 for the purposes of adoption.

28 ~~(3)(2)~~ A qualifying adoptive parent ~~An employee of the~~
29 ~~state~~ who adopts a special-needs child must apply to his or
30 her agency head to obtain the monetary benefit provided in
31 subsection ~~(2)(1)~~. Applications must be on forms approved by

1 the department and must include a certified copy of the final
2 order of adoption naming the applicant as the adoptive parent.

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

9 ~~(5)(4) Any~~ qualifying adoptive parent ~~employee of the~~
10 ~~state~~ who has a child placed in the custody of the adopting
11 parent ~~employee~~ for adoption, and who continues to reside in
12 the same household as the child placed for adoption, shall be
13 granted parental leave for a period not to exceed 6 months as
14 provided in s. 110.221.

15 Section 2. Section 110.15201, Florida Statutes, is
16 amended to read:

17 110.15201 Adoption benefits for qualifying adoptive
18 parents ~~state employees~~; rulemaking authority.--The Department
19 of Management Services may adopt rules to administer the
20 provisions of this act. ~~The~~ Such rules may provide for an
21 application process such as, but not limited to, an open
22 enrollment period during which qualifying adoptive parents
23 ~~employees~~ may apply for monetary benefits as provided in s.
24 110.152(2) ~~s. 110.152(1)~~.

25 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.
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SENATE SUMMARY

Defines the term "qualifying adoptive parent." Expands the categories of persons who are eligible to be a qualifying adoptive parent. Provides that a qualifying adoptive parent who adopts a special-needs child is eligible to receive a specified monetary benefit for a specified period of time. Authorizes the Department of Management Services to adopt rules to administer the adoption benefits program.