

By Senator Wise

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida National Guard;
3 requiring the Florida National Guard, in conjunction
4 with the Division of Community Colleges and the
5 community colleges of the state, to develop a plan to
6 provide educational opportunities to enlisted members
7 of the Florida National Guard; requiring that the plan
8 be submitted to the Governor and Legislature by a
9 certain date; providing an effective date.

10
11 WHEREAS, the Florida National Guard is a crucial component
12 of the Florida Emergency Response System in times of local and
13 statewide national disasters, civil disobedience, and other
14 catastrophic events and is a key component of the United States
15 Armed Forces, subject to be called upon for active federal duty,
16 including deployment for the War on Terrorism and other missions
17 in defense of the interests of the United States, and

18 WHEREAS, enlisted personnel in grades E-1 through E-9
19 constitute approximately 80 percent of the strength of the
20 Florida National Guard, a large percentage of whom have
21 educational deficits, primarily in grades E-1 through E-4, which
22 can limit their performance capabilities, and

23 WHEREAS, collegiate-quality educational services that
24 address basic functional and intellectual deficits in areas such
25 as reading, writing, mathematics, social and behavioral
26 sciences, cultural awareness, and natural sciences would
27 increase the value of enlisted personnel to the Florida National
28 Guard by preparing them for progressively greater
29 responsibilities, and

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30 WHEREAS, the community colleges of this state have
31 demonstrated their capabilities to respond expeditiously and
32 effectively to address unique training and education needs of
33 their students through customized associated degree programs,
34 and

35 WHEREAS, a formalized partnership between the Florida
36 National Guard and the Division of Community Colleges of the
37 Department of Education and its statewide network of community
38 colleges dedicated to the improvement of the quality of the
39 noncommissioned ranks by the systematic reduction of basic
40 functional and intellectual deficits and the elevation of
41 educational attainment to the associate degree level would
42 strengthen the capabilities of the Florida National Guard, NOW
43 THEREFORE,

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

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47 Section 1. (1) The commanding general of the Florida
48 National Guard, in conjunction with the Division of Community
49 Colleges of the Department of Education and the community
50 colleges of this state, shall develop a plan to implement a
51 program that provides educational opportunities for enlisted
52 members of the Florida National Guard. The program shall be
53 designed to increase the performance capabilities of members of
54 the Florida National Guard.

55 (2) The plan shall be submitted to the Governor, the
56 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
57 Representatives by November 1, 2009.

58 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.