

By Senator Diaz de la Portilla

36-00701-11

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education and training  
3           opportunities for public employees; amending s.  
4           110.1099, F.S.; providing certain educational  
5           opportunities for specified local government  
6           employees; amending s. 1009.265, F.S.; authorizing the  
7           use of fee waivers for specified local government  
8           employees; providing an effective date.  
9

10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
11

12           Section 1. Section 110.1099, Florida Statutes, is amended  
13 to read:

14           110.1099 Education and training opportunities for state and  
15 local government employees.-

16           (1) Education and training are an integral component in  
17 improving the delivery of services to the public. Recognizing  
18 that the application of productivity-enhancing technology and  
19 practice demands continuous educational and training  
20 opportunities, a state or local government employee may be  
21 authorized to receive a voucher or grant, for matriculation  
22 fees, to attend work-related courses at public community  
23 colleges, public career centers, or public universities. The  
24 department may implement ~~the provisions of~~ this section from  
25 funds appropriated to the department for this purpose. If In the  
26 ~~event~~ insufficient funds are appropriated to the department,  
27 each state or local government agency may supplement these funds  
28 to support the training and education needs of its employees  
29 from funds appropriated to the agency.

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30 (2) The department, in conjunction with the state and local  
31 government agencies, shall request that public universities  
32 provide evening and weekend programs for state and local  
33 government employees. When evening and weekend training and  
34 educational programs are not available, a state or local  
35 government ~~an~~ employee may be authorized to take paid time off  
36 during his or her regular working hours for training and career  
37 development, ~~as provided in s. 110.105(1)~~, if such training  
38 benefits the employer as determined by that employee's agency  
39 head.

40 (3) A state or local government ~~An~~ employee who exhibits  
41 superior aptitude and performance may be authorized by that  
42 employee's agency head to take a paid educational leave of  
43 absence for up to 1 academic year at a time, for specific  
44 approved work-related education and training. That employee must  
45 enter into a contract to return to state or local government  
46 employment for a period of time equal to the length of the leave  
47 of absence or refund salary and benefits paid during his or her  
48 educational leave of absence.

49 (4) As a precondition to approving a state or local  
50 government ~~an~~ employee's training request, the state or local  
51 government ~~an~~ agency ~~or the judicial branch~~ may require the ~~an~~  
52 employee to enter into an agreement that requires the employee  
53 to reimburse the agency ~~or judicial branch~~ for the registration  
54 fee or similar expense for any training or training series when  
55 the cost of the fee or similar expense exceeds \$1,000 if the  
56 employee voluntarily terminates employment or is discharged for  
57 cause from the agency ~~or judicial branch~~ within a specified  
58 period of time not to exceed 4 years after the conclusion of the

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59 training. This subsection does not apply to any training program  
 60 that a state or local government ~~an agency or the judicial~~  
 61 ~~branch~~ requires an employee to attend. A state or local  
 62 government ~~An agency or the judicial branch~~ may pay the  
 63 outstanding balance then due and owing on behalf of a state or  
 64 local government employee under this subsection in connection  
 65 with the recruitment and hiring of that ~~such~~ state employee.

66 (5) As used in this section, the term:

67 (a) "State employee" means an employee of the executive or  
 68 judicial branch of state government, except for a person  
 69 employed by a state university.

70 (b) "Local government employee" means a full-time employee  
 71 of a county or municipality who is a law enforcement officer as  
 72 defined in s. 943.10(1), a correctional officer as defined in s.  
 73 943.10(2), a firefighter as defined in s. 633.30(1), or an  
 74 emergency medical technician or paramedic as defined in s.  
 75 401.23.

76 (6)~~(5)~~ The Department of Management Services, in  
 77 consultation with the state and local government agencies and,  
 78 to the extent applicable, with Florida's public community  
 79 colleges, public career centers, and public universities, shall  
 80 adopt rules to administer this section.

81 Section 2. Section 1009.265, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 82 to read:

83 1009.265 ~~State employee~~ Fee waivers.—

84 (1) As a benefit to the employers ~~employer~~ and employees of  
 85 ~~the~~ state and local government, subject to approval by an  
 86 employee's agency head or the equivalent, each state university  
 87 and community college shall waive tuition and fees for state and

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88 local government employees to enroll for up to 6 credit hours of  
89 courses per term on a space-available basis.

90 (2) The Chief Financial Officer, in cooperation with the  
91 community colleges and state universities, shall identify and  
92 implement ways to ease the administrative burden to community  
93 colleges and state universities, including, but not limited to,  
94 providing easier access to verify state and local government  
95 employment.

96 (3) From funds appropriated by the Legislature for  
97 administrative costs to implement this section, community  
98 colleges and state universities shall be reimbursed on a pro  
99 rata basis according to the cost assessment data developed by  
100 the Department of Education.

101 (4) The Auditor General shall include a review of the cost  
102 assessment data in conjunction with his or her audit  
103 responsibilities for community colleges, state universities, and  
104 the Department of Education.

105 (5) As used in ~~For purposes of~~ this section, the term:

106 (a) "State employee" means an employee ~~employees of the~~  
107 ~~state include employees~~ of the executive, legislative, or ~~and~~  
108 judicial branch ~~branches~~ of state government, except for a  
109 person ~~persons~~ employed by a state university.

110 (b) "Local government employee" means a full-time employee  
111 of a county or municipality who is a law enforcement officer as  
112 defined in s. 943.10(1), a correctional officer as defined in s.  
113 943.10(2), a firefighter as defined in s. 633.30(1), or an  
114 emergency medical technician or paramedic as defined in s.  
115 401.23.

116 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011.