

The Florida Senate
HOUSE MESSAGE SUMMARY

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Military Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee

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BILL: CS/CS/SB 922, 1st Eng.

INTRODUCER: Criminal Justice Committee, Military Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee, and Senator Bennett

SUBJECT: Current and Former Military Personnel

DATE: March 7, 2012

I. Amendments Contained in Message:

House Amendment 1— 423155 (body with title)

II. Summary of Amendments Contained in Message:

House Amendment 1 is a strike-all amendment that removes three existing provisions from the bill, adds five new provisions to the bill, and amends three existing provisions in the bill.

House Amendment 1 removes the following provisions from the bill:

Specialty License Plates (Sections 3-4 of the bill)

- Removes provisions which would authorize the creation of the American Legion specialty license plate.

School District Rezoning (Section 13 of the bill)

- Removes provision which would provide a school-aged dependent of military personnel the option to remain at the school he or she currently attends if a local school board adjusts school zones which would require attendance at a different school for that student.

Resident Status for Tuition Purposes for Veterans (Section 16 of the bill)

- Removes provision which would provide in-state residency for tuition purposes to veterans who physically attend a public college or university in Florida.

House Amendment 1 adds the following provisions to the bill:

Governor's Medal of Merit (Section 1 of House Amendment 1)

- Makes a change to the meaning of “exceptional meritorious service” to expand the eligibility of an individual to be selected to receive the Governor’s Medal of Merit.

Encroachment (Section 2 of House Amendment 1)

- Clarifies provisions relating to military installation commanders’ advisory comments on land use changes.

NOTE: This language passed both houses in HB 7075.

Property Tax Exemption for Deployed Servicemembers (Sections 3-4 of House Amendment 1)

- Makes changes to the designated operations for which deployed servicemembers may qualify for an ad valorem tax exemption (adds Operation Noble Eagle and Operation Odyssey Dawn and provides an end date for Operation New Dawn).

Grants for Military Base Retention (Sections 6-7 of House Amendment 1)

- Streamlines the existing 7 defense-related grant programs administered by the Department of Economic Opportunity into 3 comprehensive grant programs.
- Revises legislative intent for the grant programs to include the Legislature's interest in supporting and sustaining military installations throughout the state.

NOTE: This language passed both houses in HB 7075.

Florida Defense Support Task Force (Sections 8-11 of House Amendment 1)

- Repeals the Florida Council on Military Base and Mission Support (Council) and transfers the powers, duties, and functions of the Council to the Florida Defense Support Task Force (Task Force).
- Transfers existing exemptions of the Council to the Task Force for records and discussions of the strengths and weaknesses of the state's military bases and strategies that are formulated to protect those bases during a base realignment and closure.

NOTE: This language passed both houses in HB 7075.

House Amendment 1 amends the following existing provisions in the bill:Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council (Section 5 of House Amendment 1)

- Prohibits state funds from being used for the purpose of reimbursing members of the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Council for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

NOTE: This change is consistent with the language that passed both houses in SB 276.

Veterans Courts (Sections 16-20 of House Amendment 1)

- Replaces the term "substance use disorder" with "substance abuse disorder".
- Provides that the Department of Corrections is not required to spend state funds to implement the section of the bill allowing a court to require certain veteran or servicemember probationers or community controllees to participate in a treatment program.

Priority Course Registration for Veterans (Sections 21-22 of House Amendment 1)

- Provides that a veteran must use GI Bill educational benefits in order to be eligible for priority course registration and provides that a veteran is eligible for priority course registration until the expiration of GI Bill benefits.
- Defines the independent postsecondary institutions that are encouraged to provide priority course registration to veterans as those independent postsecondary institutions defined in s. 1005.21(11), F.S.