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By the Committees on Rules; and Judiciary; and Senator Smith

595-04447-14 2014870c2

A bill to be entitled An act relating to insurance; amending s. 624.425, F.S.; providing that the absence of a countersignature does not affect the validity of a policy or contract; amending s. 627.7311, F.S.; providing that a county may enact and enforce ordinances applicable to certain health care clinics; amending s. 627.902, F.S.; providing that premium financing does not apply to installment payment arrangements that do not involve the advancement of funds; amending s. 627.94072, F.S.; providing an alternative form of a nonforfeiture provision for long-term care insurance; amending s. 629.271, F.S.; authorizing reciprocal insurers to return a portion of unassigned funds to their subscribers; amending s. 631.54, F.S.; defining the term "assessment year"; amending s. 631.57, F.S.; revising provisions relating to the levy of assessments on insurers by the Florida Insurance Guaranty Association; specifying the conditions under which such assessments are paid; revising procedures and timeframes for the levying of the assessments; deleting the requirement that insurers file a final accounting report documenting the recoupment; revising an exemption for assessments; amending s. 631.64, F.S.; requiring charges or recoupments to be displayed separately on premium statements to policyholders and prohibiting their inclusion in rates; amending ss. 627.727 and 631.55, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing an effective date.

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

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Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 624.425, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

624.425 Agent countersignature required, property, casualty, surety insurance.—

(1) Except as stated in s. 624.426, no authorized property, casualty, or surety insurer shall assume direct liability as to a subject of insurance resident, located, or to be performed in this state unless the policy or contract of insurance is issued by or through, and is countersigned by, an agent who is regularly commissioned and licensed currently as an agent and appointed as an agent for the insurer under this code. However, the absence of a countersignature does not affect the validity of the policy or contract. If two or more authorized insurers issue a single policy of insurance against legal liability for loss or damage to person or property caused by a the nuclear energy hazard, or a single policy insuring against loss or damage to property by radioactive contamination, whether or not also insuring against one or more other perils that may be insured proper to insure against in this state, such policy if otherwise lawful may be countersigned on behalf of all of the insurers by a licensed and appointed agent of the any insurer appearing thereon. The producing agent shall receive on each policy or contract the full and usual commission allowed and paid by the insurer to its agents on business written or transacted by them for the insurer.

Section 2. Section 627.7311, Florida Statutes, is amended

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627.7311 Effect of law on personal injury protection policies.-

- (1) The provisions and procedures authorized in ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall be implemented by insurers offering policies pursuant to the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law. The Legislature intends that these provisions and procedures have full force and effect regardless of their express inclusion in an insurance policy form, and a specific provision or procedure authorized in ss. 627.730-627.7405 shall control over general provisions in an insurance policy form. An insurer is not required to amend its policy form or to expressly notify providers, claimants, or insureds in order to implement and apply such provisions or procedures.
- (2) Sections 627.730-627.7405 do not preclude a county from enacting and enforcing an ordinance applicable to health care clinics that receive reimbursement under the Florida Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law.

Section 3. Subsection (2) of section 627.902, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

- 627.902 Premium financing by an insurer or subsidiary.-
- (2) Nothing in This part or in part XV of this chapter does not disallow disallows or otherwise apply applies to:
- (a) Installment payment arrangements offered by an insurer if such arrangements do not involve the advancement of funds which would constitute financing and exceed the service charges provided in 627.901; or
- $\underline{\text{(b)}}$ A discount for $\underline{\text{an}}$ $\underline{\text{any}}$ insured who pays the entire premium for the entire policy term at the inception of the term

595-04447-14 2014870c2

if the discount is found to be actuarially justified by the office and approved by the office pursuant to the provisions of part I of this chapter. Such actuarially justified and approved discount may shall not be deemed a component of or related to premium financing.

Section 4. Subsection (2) of section 627.94072, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

627.94072 Mandatory offers.-

(2) An insurer that offers a long-term care insurance policy, certificate, or rider in this state shall must offer a nonforfeiture protection provision providing reduced paid-up insurance, extended term, shortened benefit period, or any other benefit benefits approved by the office if all or part of a premium is not paid. A nonforfeiture provision may also be offered in the form of a return of premium on the death of the insured, or on the complete surrender or cancellation of the policy or contract. Nonforfeiture benefits and any additional premium for such benefits must be computed in an actuarially sound manner, using a methodology that has been filed with and approved by the office.

Section 5. Section 629.271, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

629.271 Distribution of savings.

(1) A reciprocal insurer may from time to time return to its subscribers any unused premiums, savings, or credits accruing to their accounts. Any Such distribution may shall not unfairly discriminate between classes of risks, or policies, or between subscribers, but such distribution may vary as to classes of subscribers based on upon the experience of such

117 classes.

- (2) In addition to the option provided in subsection (1), a domestic reciprocal insurer may, upon the prior written approval of the office, pay to its subscribers a portion of unassigned funds of up to 10 percent of surplus with distribution limited to 50 percent of net income from the previous calendar year.

 Such distribution may not unfairly discriminate between classes of risks, or policies, or between subscribers, but may vary as to classes of subscribers based on the experience of such classes.
- Section 6. Subsections (2) through (9) of section 631.54, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (3) through (10), respectively, and a new subsection (2) is added to that section to read:
 - 631.54 Definitions.—As used in this part, the term:
- (2) "Assessment year" means the 12-month period, which may begin on the first day of any calendar quarter, whether January 1, April 1, July 1, or October 1, as specified in an order issued by the office directing insurers to pay an assessment to the association. Upon entry of the order, insurers may begin collecting assessments from policyholders for the assessment year.
- Section 7. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 631.57, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
 - 631.57 Powers and duties of the association.-
- (3) (a) To the extent necessary to secure the funds for the respective accounts for the payment of covered claims, to pay the reasonable costs to administer such accounts the same, and to the extent necessary to secure the funds for the account

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595-04447-14 2014870c2

specified in s. 631.55(2)(b) or to retire indebtedness, including, without limitation, the principal, redemption premium, if any, and interest on, and related costs of issuance of, bonds issued under s. 631.695 and the funding of $\frac{1}{100}$ reserves and other payments required under the bond resolution or trust indenture pursuant to which such bonds have been issued, the office, upon certification of the board of directors, shall levy assessments initially estimated in the proportion that each insurer's net direct written premiums in this state in the classes protected by the account bears to the total of said net direct written premiums received in this state by all such insurers for the preceding calendar year for the kinds of insurance included within such account. Assessments shall be remitted to and administered by the board of directors in the manner specified by the approved plan and paragraph (f). Each insurer so assessed shall have at least 30 days' written notice as to the date the initial assessment payment is due and payable. Every assessment shall be made as a uniform percentage applicable to the net direct written premiums of each insurer in the kinds of insurance included within the account in which the assessment is made. The assessments levied against any insurer may shall not exceed in any one year more than 2 percent of that insurer's net direct written premiums in this state for the kinds of insurance included within such account during the calendar year next preceding the date of such assessments.

(b) If sufficient funds from such assessments, together with funds previously raised, are not available in any one year in the respective account to make all the payments or reimbursements then owing to insurers, the funds available shall

595-04447-14 2014870c2

be prorated and the unpaid portion shall be paid as soon thereafter as funds become available.

- (c) The Legislature finds and declares that all assessments paid by an insurer or insurer group as a result of a levy by the office, including assessments levied pursuant to paragraph (a) and emergency assessments levied pursuant to paragraph (e), constitute advances of funds from the insurer to the association. An insurer may fully recoup such advances by applying the uniform assessment percentage levied by the office to all a separate recoupment factor to the premium of policies of the same kind or line as were considered by the office in determining the assessment liability of the insurer or insurer group as set forth in paragraph (f).
- 1. Assessments levied under subparagraph (f)1. are paid before policy surcharges are collected and result in a receivable for policy surcharges collected in the future. This amount, to the extent it is likely that it will be realized, meets the definition of an admissible asset as specified in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Statement of Statutory Accounting Principles No. 4. The asset shall be established and recorded separately from the liability regardless of whether it is based on a retrospective or prospective premium-based assessment. If an insurer is unable to fully recoup the amount of the assessment because of a reduction in writings or withdrawal from the market, the amount recorded as an asset shall be reduced to the amount reasonably expected to be recouped.
- 2. Assessments levied under subparagraph (f)2. are paid after policy surcharges are collected so that the recognition of

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595-04447-14 2014870c2

assets is based on actual premium written offset by the obligation to the association.

- (d) No State funds $\underline{\text{may not}}$ of any kind shall be allocated or paid to the $\underline{\text{said}}$ association or any of its accounts.
- (e)1.a. In addition to assessments otherwise authorized in paragraph (a), and to the extent necessary to secure the funds for the account specified in s. 631.55(2)(b) for the direct payment of covered claims of insurers rendered insolvent by the effects of a hurricane and to pay the reasonable costs to administer such claims, or to retire indebtedness, including, without limitation, the principal, redemption premium, if any, and interest on, and related costs of issuance of, bonds issued under s. 631.695 and the funding of any reserves and other payments required under the bond resolution or trust indenture pursuant to which such bonds have been issued, the office, upon certification of the board of directors, shall levy emergency assessments upon insurers holding a certificate of authority. The emergency assessments payable under this paragraph by any insurer may shall not exceed in any single year more than 2 percent of that insurer's direct written premiums, net of refunds, in this state during the preceding calendar year for the kinds of insurance within the account specified in s. 631.55(2)(b).
- 2.b. Any Emergency assessments authorized under this paragraph shall be levied by the office upon insurers referred to in subparagraph 1. sub-subparagraph a., upon certification as to the need for such assessments by the board of directors. If In the event the board of directors participates in the issuance of bonds in accordance with s. 631.695, emergency assessments

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595-04447-14 2014870c2 shall be levied in each year that bonds issued under s. 631.695

and secured by such emergency assessments are outstanding, in such amounts up to such 2 percent 2-percent limit as required in order to provide for the full and timely payment of the principal of, redemption premium, if any, and interest on, and related costs of issuance of, such bonds. The emergency assessments provided for in this paragraph are assigned and pledged to the municipality, county, or legal entity issuing bonds under s. 631.695 for the benefit of the holders of such bonds, in order to enable such municipality, county, or legal entity to provide for the payment of the principal of, redemption premium, if any, and interest on such bonds, the cost of issuance of such bonds, and the funding of any reserves and other payments required under the bond resolution or trust indenture pursuant to which such bonds have been issued, without the necessity of any further action by the association, the office, or any other party. If To the extent bonds are issued under s. 631.695 and the association determines to secure such bonds by a pledge of revenues received from the emergency assessments, such bonds, upon such pledge of revenues, shall be secured by and payable from the proceeds of such emergency assessments, and the proceeds of emergency assessments levied under this paragraph shall be remitted directly to and administered by the trustee or custodian appointed for such bonds.

3.c. Emergency assessments <u>used to defease bonds issued</u> under this <u>part paragraph</u> may be payable in a single payment or, at the option of the association, may be payable in 12 monthly installments with the first installment being due and payable at

595-04447-14 2014870c2

the end of the month after an emergency assessment is levied and subsequent installments being due $\underline{\text{by }}$ not later than the end of each succeeding month.

- $\underline{4.d.}$ If emergency assessments are imposed, the report required by s. 631.695(7) $\underline{\text{must}}$ $\underline{\text{shall}}$ include an analysis of the revenues generated from the emergency assessments imposed under this paragraph.
- $\underline{5.e.}$ If emergency assessments are imposed, the references in sub-subparagraph (1)(a)3.b. and s. 631.695(2) and (7) to assessments levied under paragraph (a) $\underline{\text{must}}$ $\underline{\text{shall}}$ include emergency assessments imposed under this paragraph.
- $\underline{6.2.}$ If the board of directors participates in the issuance of bonds in accordance with s. 631.695, an annual assessment under this paragraph shall continue while the bonds issued with respect to which the assessment was imposed are outstanding, including any bonds the proceeds of which were used to refund bonds issued pursuant to s. 631.695, unless adequate provision has been made for the payment of the bonds in the documents authorizing the issuance of such bonds.
- 7.3. Emergency assessments under this paragraph are not premium and are not subject to the premium tax, to any fees, or to any commissions. An insurer is liable for all emergency assessments that the insurer collects and shall treat the failure of an insured to pay an emergency assessment as a failure to pay the premium. An insurer is not liable for uncollectible emergency assessments.
- (f) The recoupment factor applied to policies in accordance with paragraph (c) shall be selected by the insurer or insurer group so as to provide for the probable recoupment of both

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595-04447-14 2014870c2

assessments levied pursuant to paragraph (a) and emergency assessments over a period of 12 months, unless the insurer or insurer group, at its option, elects to recoup the assessment over a longer period. The recoupment factor shall apply to all policies of the same kind or line as were considered by the office in determining the assessment liability of the insurer or insurer group issued or renewed during a 12-month period. If the insurer or insurer group does not collect the full amount of the assessment during one 12-month period, the insurer or insurer group may apply recalculated recoupment factors to policies issued or renewed during one or more succeeding 12-month periods. If, at the end of a 12-month period, the insurer or insurer group has collected from the combined kinds or lines of policies subject to assessment more than the total amount of the assessment paid by the insurer or insurer group, the excess amount shall be disbursed as follows:

- 1. The association, office, and insurers remitting assessments pursuant to paragraph (a) or paragraph (e) must comply with the following:
- a. In the order levying an assessment, the office shall specify the actual percentage amount to be collected uniformly from all the policyholders of insurers subject to the assessment and the date on which the assessment year begins, which may not begin until 90 days after the association board certifies such an assessment.
- b. Insurers shall make an initial payment to the association before the beginning of the assessment year on or before the date specified in the order of the office.
 - c. Insurers that have written insurance in the calendar

595-04447-14 2014870c2

year before the year in which the assessment is certified by the board shall make an initial payment based on the net direct written premium amount from the prior calendar year as set forth in the insurers' annual statements, multiplied by the uniform percentage of premium specified in the order issued by the office. Insurers that have not written insurance in the prior calendar year in any of the lines under the account which are being assessed, but that are writing insurance as of, or after, the date the board certifies the assessment to the office, shall pay an amount based on a good faith estimate of the amount of net direct written premium anticipated to be written in the subject lines of business for the assessment year, multiplied by the uniform percentage of premium specified in the order issued by the office.

d. Insurers shall file a reconciliation report with the association within 45 days after the end of the assessment year which indicates the amount of the initial payment to the association before the assessment year, whether such amount was based on net direct written premium contained in a prior calendar year annual statement or a good faith projection, the amount actually collected during the assessment year, and such other information contained on a form adopted by the association and provided to the insurers in advance. If the insurer collected from policyholders more than the amount initially paid, the insurer shall pay the excess amount to the association. If the insurer collected from policyholders an amount which is less than the amount initially paid to the association, the association shall credit the insurer that amount against future assessments. Such payment reconciliation

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595-04447-14 2014870c2

report, and any payment of excess amounts collected from policyholders, shall be completed and remitted to the association within 90 days after the end of the assessment year.

The association shall send a final reconciliation report on all insurers to the office within 120 days after each assessment year.

- e. Insurers remitting reconciliation reports to the association under this paragraph are subject to s.

 626.9541(1)(e). If the excess amount does not exceed 15 percent of the total assessment paid by the insurer or insurer group, the excess amount shall be remitted to the association within 60 days after the end of the 12-month period in which the excess recoupment charges were collected.
- 2. The association may use a monthly installment method instead of the method described in sub-subparagraphs 1.b. and c. or in combination thereof based on the association's projected cash flow. If the association projects that it has cash on hand for the payment of anticipated claims in the applicable account for at least 6 months, the board may make an estimate of the assessment needed and may recommend to the office the assessment percentage that may be collected as a monthly assessment. The office may, in the order levying the assessment on insurers, specify that the assessment is due and payable monthly as the funds are collected from insureds throughout the assessment year, in which case the assessment shall be a uniform percentage of premium collected during the assessment year and shall be collected from all policyholders with policies in the classes protected by the account. All insurers shall collect the assessment without regard to whether the insurers reported

595-04447-14 2014870c2

premium in the year preceding the assessment. Insurers are not required to advance funds if the association and the office elect to use the monthly installment option. All funds collected shall be retained by the association for the payment of current or future claims. This subparagraph does not alter the obligation of an insurer to remit assessments levied pursuant to this subsection to the association. If the excess amount exceeds 15 percent of the total assessment paid by the insurer or insurer group, the excess amount shall be returned to the insurer's or insurer group's current policyholders by refunds or premium credits. The association shall use any remitted excess recoupment amounts to reduce future assessments.

- (g) Amounts recouped pursuant to this subsection for assessments levied under paragraph (a) due to insolvencies on or after July 1, 2010, are considered premium solely for premium tax purposes and are not subject to fees or commissions. However, insurers shall treat the failure of an insured to pay a recoupment charge as a failure to pay the premium.
- (h) At least 15 days before applying the recoupment factor to any policies, the insurer or insurer group shall file with the office a statement for informational purposes only setting forth the amount of the recoupment factor and an explanation of how the recoupment factor will be applied. Such statement shall include documentation of the assessment paid by the insurer or insurer group and the arithmetic calculations supporting the recoupment factor. The insurer or insurer group may use the recoupment factor at any time after the expiration of the 15-day period. The insurer or insurer group need submit only one informational statement for all lines of business using the same

recoupment factor.

- (i) No later than 90 days after the insurer or insurer group has completed the recoupment process, the insurer or insurer group shall file with the office, for information purposes only, a final accounting report documenting the recoupment. The report shall provide the amounts of assessments paid by the insurer or insurer group, the amounts and percentages recouped by year from each affected line of business, and the direct written premium subject to recoupment by year. The insurer or insurer group need submit only one report for all lines of business using the same recoupment factor.
- (h) Assessments levied under this subsection are levied upon insurers. This subsection does not create a cause of action by a policyholder with respect to the levying of, or a policyholder's duty to pay, such assessments.
- (4) The <u>office</u> department may exempt <u>or temporarily defer</u> any insurer from any regular or emergency assessment if <u>the</u> <u>office finds that the insurer is impaired or insolvent or if</u> an assessment would result in such insurer's financial statement reflecting an amount of capital or surplus less than the sum of the minimum amount required by any jurisdiction in which the insurer is authorized to transact insurance.

Section 8. Section 631.64, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

631.64 Recognition of assessments in rates.—Charges or recoupments shall be separately displayed on premium statements to enable policyholders to determine the amount charged for association assessments but may not be included in rates filed

595-04447-14 2014870c2

and approved by the office. The rates and premiums charged for insurance policies to which this part applies may include amounts sufficient to recoup a sum equal to the amounts paid to the association by the member insurer less any amounts returned to the member insurer by the association, and such rates shall not be deemed excessive because they contain an amount reasonably calculated to recoup assessments paid by the member insurer.

Section 9. Subsection (5) of section 627.727, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

- 627.727 Motor vehicle insurance; uninsured and underinsured vehicle coverage; insolvent insurer protection.—
- (5) Any person having a claim against an insolvent insurer as defined in s. 631.54(6) under the provisions of this section shall present such claim for payment to the Florida Insurance Guaranty Association only. In the event of a payment to <u>a any</u> person in settlement of a claim arising under the provisions of this section, the association is not subrogated or entitled to any recovery against the claimant's insurer. The association, however, has the rights of recovery as set forth in chapter 631 in the proceeds recoverable from the assets of the insolvent insurer.

Section 10. Subsection (1) of section 631.55, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

631.55 Creation of the association.

(1) There is created a nonprofit corporation to be known as the "Florida Insurance Guaranty Association, Incorporated." All insurers defined as member insurers in s. 631.54(7) shall be members of the association as a condition of their authority to

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595-04447-14 2014870c2

transact insurance in this state, and, further, as a condition of such authority, an insurer <u>must</u> <u>shall</u> agree to reimburse the association for all claim payments the association makes on <u>the said</u> insurer's behalf if such insurer is subsequently rehabilitated. The association shall perform its functions under a plan of operation established and approved under s. 631.58 and shall exercise its powers through a board of directors established under s. 631.56. The corporation shall have all those powers granted or permitted nonprofit corporations, as provided in chapter 617.

Section 11. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.