

**By** the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security; and Senator Bean

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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to military and veterans affairs;  
3           creating the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance  
4           Task Force within the Department of State; specifying  
5           membership of the task force; authorizing  
6           reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses;  
7           prescribing duties of the task force; requiring  
8           submission of a report to the Governor and the  
9           Legislature by a specified date; providing for  
10          expiration of the task force; providing for staffing;  
11          providing legislative findings regarding continuing  
12          education for veterans of the United States Armed  
13          Forces; providing legislative intent for the State  
14          Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the  
15          State University System to work collaboratively to  
16          align existing degree programs at state universities  
17          and Florida College System institutions, train  
18          faculty, incorporate outreach services into existing  
19          disability services, facilitate statewide meetings for  
20          personnel, and provide sufficient courses and priority  
21          registration to veterans; amending s. 322.08, F.S.;  
22          requiring the application form for an original,  
23          renewal, or replacement driver license or  
24          identification card to include a voluntary checkoff  
25          authorizing veterans to request written or electronic  
26          information on federal, state, and local benefits and  
27          services for veterans; requiring the requested  
28          information to be delivered by a third-party provider;  
29          requiring the Department of Highway Safety and Motor

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30 Vehicles to report monthly to the Department of  
31 Veterans' Affairs the names and mailing or e-mail  
32 addresses of veterans who request information;  
33 requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs to  
34 disseminate veteran contact information to the third-  
35 party provider; requiring that the third-party  
36 provider be a nonprofit organization; defining the  
37 term "nonprofit organization"; requiring that the  
38 Department of Veterans' Affairs provide veteran  
39 contact information to the appropriate county or city  
40 veteran service officer; specifying that a third-party  
41 provider may use veteran contact information only as  
42 authorized; prohibiting a third-party provider from  
43 selling veteran contact information; requiring a  
44 third-party provider to maintain confidentiality of  
45 veteran contact information under specified  
46 provisions; providing a penalty; amending s. 322.21,  
47 F.S.; revising eligibility for veterans for exemptions  
48 from certain license fees; providing an effective  
49 date.

50  
51 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

52  
53 Section 1. Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task  
54 Force.—The Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force, a  
55 task force as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes, is created  
56 within the Department of State. The task force is created for  
57 the express purpose of studying issues involving the development  
58 and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent

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59 uniformed services voters to electronically submit voted  
60 ballots.

61 (1) The task force is composed of 20 members, as follows:

62 (a) The Secretary of State or his or her designee, who  
63 shall serve as chair of the task force.

64 (b) The Adjutant General or his or her designee.

65 (c) The executive director of the Department of Veterans'  
66 Affairs or his or her designee.

67 (d) The executive director of the Agency for State  
68 Technology or his or her designee.

69 (e) One member of the Senate appointed by the President of  
70 the Senate.

71 (f) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by  
72 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

73 (g) One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority  
74 Leader of the Senate.

75 (h) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by  
76 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

77 (i) One member appointed by the Governor.

78 (j) Six supervisors of elections appointed by the Secretary  
79 of State.

80 (k) Five individuals appointed by the Secretary of State,  
81 with relevant expertise in computers, the Internet, or other  
82 associated technologies.

83 (2) Members of the task force shall serve without  
84 compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and  
85 travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

86 (3) The task force, at a minimum, shall study and report on  
87 the following issues:

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88 (a) Any factor that limits the ability of absent uniformed  
89 services voters to request, receive, and return absentee ballots  
90 within the current statutory time period for casting absentee  
91 ballots.

92 (b) The costs associated with the development and  
93 implementation of an online voting system.

94 (c) The feasibility of absent uniformed services voters  
95 using an online voting system to electronically submit a voted  
96 ballot.

97 (d) The security of electronically submitting a voted  
98 ballot through an online voting system.

99 (e) Procedures adopted by other states to facilitate  
100 greater electoral participation among absent uniformed services  
101 voters.

102 (4) The Secretary of State shall submit a report to the  
103 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
104 House of Representatives by July 1, 2016, containing the task  
105 force's recommendation concerning whether the state should  
106 pursue the development and implementation of an online voting  
107 system that allows absent uniformed services voters to  
108 electronically submit voted ballots. If the task force favorably  
109 recommends an online voting system, the report must include  
110 recommended steps for developing and implementing such a system.  
111 Upon submission of the report, the task force shall expire.

112 (5) The Division of Elections of the Department of State  
113 shall provide support staff for the task force. The Agency for  
114 State Technology shall assist the task force upon request.

115 Section 2. The Legislature finds that many veterans of the  
116 United States Armed Forces in this state have completed training

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117 and coursework during their military service, including overseas  
118 deployments, resulting in tangible and quantifiable strides in  
119 their pursuit of a postsecondary degree. The Legislature further  
120 finds that the State Board of Education and the Board of  
121 Governors of the State University System must work together to  
122 ensure that military training and coursework are granted  
123 academic credit in order to assist veterans in continuing their  
124 education. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature that  
125 the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors work  
126 collaboratively to:

127 (1) Align existing degree programs, including, but not  
128 limited to, vocational and technical degrees, at each state  
129 university and Florida College System institution with  
130 applicable military training and experience to maximize academic  
131 credit award for such training and experience.

132 (2) Appoint and train specific faculty within each degree  
133 program at each state university and Florida College System  
134 institution as liaisons and contacts for veterans.

135 (3) Incorporate outreach services tailored to disabled  
136 veterans into existing disability services on the campus of each  
137 state university and Florida College System institution to make  
138 available to such veterans information on disability services  
139 provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,  
140 other federal and state agencies, and private entities.

141 (4) Facilitate statewide meetings for personnel at state  
142 universities and Florida College System institutions who provide  
143 student services for veterans to discuss and develop best  
144 practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and attend  
145 presentations by individuals with expertise in the unique needs

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146 of veterans.

147 (5) Make every effort to provide veterans with sufficient  
148 courses required for graduation, including, but not limited to,  
149 giving priority registration to veterans.

150 Section 3. Present subsection (8) of section 322.08,  
151 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (9), and a new  
152 subsection (8) is added to that section, to read:

153 322.08 Application for license; requirements for license  
154 and identification card forms.—

155 (8) (a) To support the carrying out of the duties of the  
156 Department of Veterans' Affairs prescribed in s. 292.05 and to  
157 facilitate outreach to veterans residing in this state, the  
158 application form for an original, renewal, or replacement driver  
159 license or identification card must include a voluntary checkoff  
160 authorizing a veteran of the United States Armed Forces to  
161 request written or electronic information on federal, state, and  
162 local benefits and services available to veterans. The veteran  
163 may elect to receive requested information through United States  
164 mail or by e-mail. The requested information shall be delivered  
165 to the veteran by any third party provider selected by the  
166 Department of Veterans' Affairs to act on its behalf.

167 (b) The department shall collaborate with the Department of  
168 Veterans' Affairs to administer this subsection. The department  
169 shall report monthly to the Department of Veterans' Affairs the  
170 name and mailing address or e-mail address of each veteran who  
171 requests information as provided in paragraph (a). Following  
172 receipt of the monthly report, the Department of Veterans'  
173 Affairs shall disseminate the contact information for each such  
174 veteran to the third-party provider acting on its behalf. The

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175 third-party provider must be a nonprofit organization with  
176 sufficient ability to communicate with veterans residing  
177 throughout this state. For purposes of this paragraph, the term  
178 "nonprofit organization" means an organization exempt from the  
179 federal income tax under s. 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of  
180 1986 or any federal, state, or local governmental entity.

181 (c) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (b), the  
182 Department of Veterans' Affairs shall disseminate the contact  
183 information for a veteran who selects the voluntary checkoff to  
184 the appropriate county or city veteran service officer in order  
185 to facilitate further outreach to veterans.

186 (d)1. The contact information of a veteran which is  
187 obtained by a third-party provider pursuant to this subsection  
188 may be used only as authorized by this subsection. The third-  
189 party provider may not sell such contact information. Except as  
190 otherwise provided, the third-party provider must maintain the  
191 confidentiality of the contact information in accordance with  
192 chapter 119 and the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of  
193 1994, 18 U.S.C. ss. 2721 et seq.

194 2. A person who willfully and knowingly violates this  
195 paragraph commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable  
196 as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

197 Section 4. Subsection (7) of section 322.21, Florida  
198 Statutes, is amended to read:

199 322.21 License fees; procedure for handling and collecting  
200 fees.—

201 (7) Any veteran honorably discharged from the Armed Forces  
202 who has served in combat ~~been issued a valid identification card~~  
203 ~~by the Department of Veterans' Affairs in accordance with s.~~

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204 ~~295.17, has been determined by the United States Department of~~  
205 ~~Veterans Affairs or its predecessor to have a 100 percent total~~  
206 ~~and permanent service-connected disability rating for~~  
207 ~~compensation, or has been determined to have a service-connected~~  
208 ~~total and permanent disability rating of 100 percent, is in~~  
209 ~~receipt of disability retirement pay from any branch of the~~  
210 ~~United States Armed Services, and who is qualified to obtain a~~  
211 driver license under this chapter is exempt from all fees  
212 required by this section.

213 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.