

HB 7133

2015

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to military and veteran support;
3 amending s. 292.10, F.S.; authorizing local governing
4 bodies to aid and assist veterans with a general
5 discharge under honorable conditions in presenting
6 claims for and securing federal and state benefits and
7 privileges; requiring that the Department of Veterans'
8 Affairs, through a direct-support organization and in
9 consultation with the Department of Agriculture and
10 Consumer Services, include certain federal, state, and
11 local information on agriculture and farming
12 opportunities in the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide;
13 amending s. 455.213, F.S.; exempting veterans with a
14 general discharge under honorable conditions from
15 initial licensing, initial application, and initial
16 unlicensed activity fees for any license issued by the
17 Department of Business and Professional Regulation;
18 requiring that the Department of Highway Safety and
19 Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs
20 jointly create a pilot program to provide onsite
21 commercial driver license testing opportunities to
22 qualified members of the Florida National Guard;
23 providing an effective date.

24
25 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
26

27 Section 1. Section 292.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to
 28 read:

29 292.10 Local governing bodies authorized to assist war
 30 veterans; powers.—The board of county commissioners of each
 31 county and the governing body of each municipality ~~city~~ in the
 32 state may ~~are hereby granted full and complete power and~~
 33 ~~authority to~~ aid and assist, wherever practical and possible,
 34 ~~feasible the~~ veterans, ~~male and female,~~ who have served in the
 35 Armed Forces of the United States in any war or who have ~~and~~
 36 received an honorable discharge or a general discharge under
 37 honorable conditions from any branch of the military service of
 38 the United States, and their dependents, in presenting claims
 39 for and securing such compensation, hospitalization, education,
 40 loans, career training, and other benefits or privileges to
 41 which the said ~~veterans,~~ or their dependents ~~any of them,~~ are or
 42 may become entitled under any federal or state law or regulation
 43 by reason of the veteran's ~~their~~ service in the Armed Forces of
 44 the United States.

45 Section 2. (1) The Department of Veterans' Affairs,
 46 through a direct-support organization under s. 292.055, Florida
 47 Statutes, and in consultation with the Department of Agriculture
 48 and Consumer Services, shall include a section on agriculture
 49 and farming opportunities in the state for veterans of the
 50 United States Armed Forces in the Florida Veterans' Benefits
 51 Guide. The section must include, at a minimum, information on
 52 federal, state, and local agriculture and farming incentives,

HB 7133

2015

53 assistance, grants, and outreach and advocacy programs available
54 to veterans.

55 (2) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall make the
56 benefits guide available to all military installations in the
57 state and provide a consolidated description of and link to the
58 agriculture and farming opportunities section on its website.

59 Section 3. Subsection (12) of section 455.213, Florida
60 Statutes, is amended to read:

61 455.213 General licensing provisions.—

62 (12) The department shall waive the initial licensing fee,
63 the initial application fee, and the initial unlicensed activity
64 fee for a military veteran or his or her spouse at the time of
65 discharge, if he or she applies to the department for a license,
66 in a format prescribed by the department, within 60 months after
67 the veteran is discharged from any branch of the United States
68 Armed Forces. To qualify for this waiver, the veteran must have
69 been honorably discharged or received a general discharge under
70 honorable conditions.

71 Section 4. By June 30, 2016, the Department of Highway
72 Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs
73 shall jointly create a pilot program to provide onsite
74 commercial driver license testing opportunities to qualified
75 members of the Florida National Guard pursuant to the Department
76 of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles commercial driver license
77 skills test waiver under s. 322.12. Testing must be held at a
78 Florida National Guard Armory, an Armed Forces Reserve Center,

HB 7133

2015

79 or the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. The pilot program
80 shall be accomplished using existing funds appropriated to each
81 department.

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