

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 conduct a pilot program to provide onsite
21 commercial driver license testing opportunities to
22 qualified members of the Florida National Guard;
23 requiring the departments to jointly submit a report
24 to the Legislature; providing an effective date.

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

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

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

46 Section 2. (1) By December 31, 2015, the Department of
47 Veterans' Affairs, through a direct-support organization under
48 s. 292.055, Florida Statutes, and in consultation with the
49 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, shall create a
50 section on agriculture and farming opportunities in the state
51 for veterans of the United States Armed Forces to be included in
52 the 2016 and 2017 editions of the Florida Veterans' Benefits

53 Guide. The section must include, at a minimum, information on
54 federal, state, and local agriculture and farming incentives,
55 assistance, grants, and outreach and advocacy programs available
56 to veterans.

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

61 (3) This section shall not be codified in the Florida
62 Statutes.

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

65 455.213 General licensing provisions.—

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

75 Section 4. (1) By July 1, 2016, the Department of Highway
76 Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs
77 shall jointly conduct a pilot program to provide onsite
78 commercial driver license testing opportunities to qualified

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79 members of the Florida National Guard pursuant to the Department
80 of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles commercial driver license
81 skills test waiver under s. 322.12. Testing must be held at a
82 Florida National Guard Armory, an Armed Forces Reserve Center,
83 or the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. The pilot program
84 shall be accomplished using existing funds appropriated to each
85 department.

86 (2) By June 30, 2017, the Department of Highway Safety and
87 Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs shall
88 jointly submit a report to the President of the Senate and the
89 Speaker of the House of Representatives providing the results of
90 the pilot program.

91 (3) This section is repealed October 1, 2017, and shall
92 not be codified in the Florida Statutes.

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