

| LEGISLATIVE ACTION | | |
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The Committee on Rules (Gruters) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

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Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert:

Section 1. Subsection (8) of section 61.046, Florida

Statutes, is amended to read: 61.046 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the term:

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(8) "Income" means any form of payment to an individual, regardless of source, including, but not limited to: wages, salary, commissions and bonuses, compensation as an independent contractor, worker's compensation, disability benefits, annuity

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and retirement benefits, pensions, dividends, interest, royalties, trusts, and any other payments, made by any person, private entity, federal or state government, or any unit of local government. United States Department of Veterans Affairs disability benefits and combat-related disability benefits and reemployment assistance or unemployment compensation, as defined in chapter 443, are excluded from this definition of income except for purposes of establishing an amount of child support.

Section 2. Section 61.08, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

- 61.08 Alimony.-
- (1) As used in this section, the term:
- (a) "Alimony" means a court-ordered or voluntary payment of support by one spouse to the other spouse. The term includes any voluntary payment made after the date of filing of an order for maintenance, spousal support, temporary support, or separate support when the payment is not intended for the benefit of a child in common.
- (b) "Gross income" means gross income as determined in accordance with s. 61.30.
- (c) "Net income" means income that is determined by subtracting allowable deductions from gross income. For purposes of this section, allowable deductions include any of the following:
- 1. Federal, state, or local income tax deductions, adjusted for actual filing status and allowable dependents and income tax liabilities.
 - 2. Federal insurance contributions or self-employment tax.
 - 3. Mandatory union dues.

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- 41 4. Mandatory retirement payments.
 - 5. Health insurance payments, excluding payments for coverage of a minor child.
 - 6. Court-ordered support for other children which is actually paid.
 - 7. Spousal support paid pursuant to a court order from a previous marriage.
 - (2) (a) (1) In a proceeding for dissolution of marriage, the court may grant alimony to either party in the form of, which alimony may be bridge-the-gap, rehabilitative, or durational alimony, or a permanent in nature or any combination of these forms of alimony, but shall prioritize an award of bridge-thegap alimony, followed by rehabilitative alimony, over any other form of alimony. The court may grant permanent alimony only if the parties enter into an agreement for permanent alimony. In an any award of alimony, the court may order periodic payments, or payments in lump sum, or both.
 - (b) The court shall make written findings regarding the basis for awarding a combination of forms of alimony, including the type of alimony and the length of time for which the alimony is awarded. The court may award a combination of forms of alimony only to provide greater economic assistance in order to allow the recipient to achieve rehabilitation.
 - (c) The court may consider the adultery of either spouse and the circumstances thereof in determining the amount of alimony, if any, to be awarded. However, the adultery of a spouse may not be the court's sole basis for denying a request for alimony or awarding alimony, unless the adultery contributed to a depletion of marital assets. In all dissolution actions,

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the court shall include written findings of fact relative to the factors provided enumerated in subsection (3) $\frac{(2)}{(2)}$ supporting the an award or denial of alimony.

- (3) (3) (2) In determining whether to award alimony or maintenance, the court shall first make a specific, written factual determination as to whether the other either party has an actual need for alimony or maintenance and whether the other either party has the ability to pay alimony or maintenance. If the court finds that the a party seeking alimony has a need for alimony or maintenance and that the other party has the ability to pay alimony or maintenance, then in determining the proper type and amount of alimony or maintenance under subsections (5), (6), and (7) $\frac{(5)-(8)}{(8)}$, the court shall consider all relevant factors, including, but not limited to:
- (a) The standard of living established during the marriage, including the needs and necessities of life for each party after the dissolution of marriage, taking into consideration the presumption that both parties will have a lower standard of living after the dissolution of marriage than the standard of living they enjoyed during the marriage. This presumption may be overcome by a preponderance of the evidence.
 - (b) The duration of the marriage.
- (c) The age and the physical and emotional condition of each party.
- (d) The financial resources of each party, including the nonmarital and the marital assets and liabilities distributed to each.
- (e) The earning capacities, educational levels, vocational skills, and employability of the parties and, when applicable,

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the time necessary for either party to acquire sufficient education or training to enable such party to find appropriate employment.

- (f) The contribution of each party to the marriage, including, but not limited to, services rendered in homemaking, child care, education, and career building of either the other party.
- (q) The responsibilities each party will have with regard to any minor children whom the parties they have in common.
- (h) The tax treatment and consequences to both parties of an any alimony award, including the designation of all or a portion of the payment as a nontaxable, nondeductible payment.
- (i) All sources of income available to either party, including income available to either party through investments of any asset held by that party.
- (j) Any other factor necessary for to do equity and justice between the parties if such factor is specifically identified in the award with findings of fact justifying the application of such factor.
- (4) To the extent necessary to protect an award of alimony, the obligee may court may order any party who is ordered to pay alimony to purchase or maintain a life insurance policy on the obligor's life in an amount adequate to or a bond, or to otherwise secure such alimony award with any other assets which may be suitable for that purpose. If the obligee purchases a life insurance policy, the obligor shall cooperate in the process of procuring the issuance and underwriting of the life insurance policy.
 - (4) For purposes of determining alimony, there is a

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rebuttable presumption that a short-term marriage is a marriage having a duration of less than 7 years, a moderate-term marriage is a marriage having a duration of greater than 7 years but less than 17 years, and long-term marriage is a marriage having a duration of 17 years or greater. The length of a marriage is the period of time from the date of marriage until the date of filing of an action for dissolution of marriage.

- (5) Bridge-the-gap alimony may be awarded to assist a party by providing support to allow the party to make a transition from being married to being single. Bridge-the-gap alimony is designed to assist a party with legitimate identifiable shortterm needs, and the length of an award of bridge-the-gap alimony may not exceed 2 years. An award of bridge-the-gap alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon the remarriage of the party receiving alimony. An award of bridge-the-gap alimony is shall not be modifiable in amount or duration.
- (6)(a) Rehabilitative alimony may be awarded to assist a party in establishing the capacity for self-support through either:
 - 1. The redevelopment of previous skills or credentials; or
- 2. The acquisition of education, training, or work experience necessary to develop appropriate employment skills or credentials.
- (b) In order to award rehabilitative alimony, there must be a specific and defined rehabilitative plan which shall be included as a part of any order awarding rehabilitative alimony.
- (c) The length of an award of rehabilitative alimony may not exceed 5 years or the limitations for durational alimony as provided in subsection (7), whichever period of time is shorter.

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(d) An award of rehabilitative alimony may be modified or terminated in accordance with s. 61.14 based upon a substantial change in circumstances, upon noncompliance with the rehabilitative plan, or upon completion of the rehabilitative plan if the plan is completed before the length of the award of rehabilitative alimony expires.

(7) (a) Durational alimony may be awarded when permanent periodic alimony is inappropriate. The purpose of durational alimony is to provide a party with economic assistance for a set period of time following a marriage of short or moderate duration or following a marriage of long duration if there is no ongoing need for support on a permanent basis. An award of durational alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon the remarriage of the party receiving alimony. The amount of an award of durational alimony may be modified or terminated based upon a substantial change in circumstances or upon a finding that a supportive relationship exists or existed between the obligee and another person in accordance with s. 61.14. However, The length of an award of durational alimony may not be modified except under exceptional circumstances and may not exceed 50 percent of the length of a the marriage lasting less than 20 years or 75 percent of the length of a marriage lasting 20 years or more. For purposes of this section, the length of a marriage is the period of time beginning on the date of marriage and ending on the date an action for dissolution of marriage is filed. However, if the party seeking alimony is either medically needy under part III of chapter 409 and related rules or is the full-time in-home caregiver to a fully and permanently mentally or physically disabled child who is common to the parties, the

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court may extend durational alimony beyond 50 percent of the duration of the marriage until the death of the child or until the court determines that there is no longer a need for durational alimony.

- (b) When awarding durational alimony, the court must make written findings that an award of another type of alimony, or a combination of the other forms of alimony, is not appropriate.
- (c) The amount of durational alimony is the amount determined to be the obligee's reasonable need or 30 percent of the difference between the parties' net incomes, whichever amount is less.
- (8) A party against whom alimony is sought who has met the requirements for retirement in accordance with s. 61.14(12) before the filing of the petition for dissolution of marriage may not be ordered to pay bridge-the-gap, rehabilitative, or durational alimony, unless the court determines that:
- (a) The party seeking alimony has not reached the age to qualify for any social security retirement benefits; and
- (b) As a result of the dissolution of marriage, the party seeking alimony would, based on the income and assets available after the dissolution is final, meet the primary qualifications for the Florida Medicaid medically needy program under part III of chapter 409 and the related rules in effect on March 1, 2020.
- (9) (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, alimony may not be awarded to a party who has a monthly net income that is equal to or more than the other party's monthly net income.
- (b) Social security retirement benefits may not be imputed to the obligor as demonstrated by a social security retirement benefits entitlement letter unless those benefits are actually



being paid.

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(c) If the obligee alleges that a physical disability has impaired his or her capability to earn the income imputed by the court, the obligee must have qualified for benefits under the Social Security Administration Disability Insurance Program or, in the event the obligee is not eligible for the program, must demonstrate that his or her disability meets the disability qualification standards of the Social Security Administration Disability Insurance Program.

(8) Permanent alimony may be awarded to provide for the needs and necessities of life as they were established during the marriage of the parties for a party who lacks the financial ability to meet his or her needs and necessities of life following a dissolution of marriage. Permanent alimony may be awarded following a marriage of long duration if such an award is appropriate upon consideration of the factors set forth in subsection (2), following a marriage of moderate duration if such an award is appropriate based upon clear and convincing evidence after consideration of the factors set forth in subsection (2), or following a marriage of short duration if there are written findings of exceptional circumstances. In awarding permanent alimony, the court shall include a finding that no other form of alimony is fair and reasonable under the circumstances of the parties. An award of permanent alimony terminates upon the death of either party or upon the remarriage of the party receiving alimony. An award may be modified or terminated based upon a substantial change in circumstances or upon the existence of a supportive relationship in accordance with s. 61.14.

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- (9) The award of alimony may not leave the payor with significantly less net income than the net income of the recipient unless there are written findings of exceptional circumstances.
- (10) (a) With respect to any order requiring the payment of alimony entered on or after January 1, 1985, unless the provisions of paragraph (c) or paragraph (d) applies apply, the court shall direct in the order that the payments of alimony be made through the appropriate depository as provided in s. 61.181.
- (b) With respect to any order requiring the payment of alimony entered before January 1, 1985, upon the subsequent appearance, on or after that date, of one or both parties before the court having jurisdiction for the purpose of modifying or enforcing the order or in any other proceeding related to the order, or upon the application of either party, unless the provisions of paragraph (c) or paragraph (d) applies apply, the court shall modify the terms of the order as necessary to direct that payments of alimony be made through the appropriate depository as provided in s. 61.181.
- (c) If there is no minor child, alimony payments need not be directed through the depository.
- (d)1. If there is a minor child of the parties and both parties so request, the court may order that alimony payments need not be directed through the depository. In this case, the order of support must shall provide, or be deemed to provide, that either party may subsequently apply to the depository to require that payments be made through the depository. The court shall provide a copy of the order to the depository.

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- 2. If the provisions of subparagraph 1. applies apply, either party may subsequently file with the depository an affidavit alleging default or arrearages in payment and stating that the party wishes to initiate participation in the depository program. The party shall provide copies of the affidavit to the court and the other party or parties. Fifteen days after receipt of the affidavit, the depository shall notify all parties that future payments shall be directed to the depository.
- 3. In IV-D cases, the IV-D agency has shall have the same rights as the oblique in requesting that payments be made through the depository.
- (11) The court shall consider any alimony payments made to the obligee after the date of filing of a petition for dissolution of marriage, either voluntarily or pursuant to a court order, in determining the amount and length of an award of rehabilitative or durational alimony.

Section 3. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 61.14, Florida Statutes, is amended, and paragraph (c) is added to subsection (11) and subsections (12), (13), and (14) are added to that section, to read:

61.14 Enforcement and modification of support, maintenance, or alimony agreements or orders.-

(1)

(b) 1. The court may reduce or terminate an award of alimony or order reimbursement to the obligor for any amount the court determines is equitable upon specific written findings by the court that since the granting of a divorce and the award of alimony, a supportive relationship exists or has existed between

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the obligee and another $\frac{1}{2}$ person at any time during the 180 days before the filing of a petition for modification of alimony with whom the obligee resides. On the issue of whether alimony should be reduced or terminated under this paragraph, the burden is on the obligor to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that a supportive relationship exists or existed.

- 2. In determining whether an existing award of alimony should be reduced or terminated because of an alleged supportive relationship between an obligee and a person who is not related by consanguinity or affinity and with whom the oblique resides, the court shall elicit the nature and extent of the relationship in question. The court shall give consideration, without limitation, to circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following, in determining the relationship of an obligee to another person:
- a. The extent to which the obligee and the other person have held themselves out as a married couple by engaging in conduct such as using the same last name, using a common mailing address, referring to each other in terms such as "my husband," or "my wife," "my partner," or "my fiance" or otherwise conducting themselves in a manner that evidences a permanent or longstanding committed and supportive relationship.
- b. The period of time that the obligee has resided with the other person in a permanent place of abode.
- c. The extent to which the obligee and the other person have pooled their assets or income or otherwise exhibited financial interdependence.
- d. The extent to which the obligee or the other person has supported the other, in whole or in part.

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- e. The extent to which the obligee or the other person has performed valuable services for the other.
 - f. The extent to which the obligee or the other person has performed valuable services for the other's company or employer.
 - g. Whether the obligee and the other person have worked together to create or enhance anything of value.
 - h. Whether the oblique and the other person have jointly contributed to the purchase of any real or personal property.
 - i. Evidence in support of a claim that the obligee and the other person have an express agreement regarding property sharing or support.
 - j. Evidence in support of a claim that the obligee and the other person have an implied agreement regarding property sharing or support.
 - k. Whether the obligee and the other person have provided support to the children of one another, regardless of any legal duty to do so.
 - 1. Whether the obligee and the other person are engaged to be married.
 - 3. This paragraph does not abrogate the requirement that every marriage in this state be solemnized under a license, does not recognize a common law marriage as valid, and does not recognize a de facto marriage. This paragraph recognizes only that relationships do exist that provide economic support equivalent to a marriage and that alimony terminable on remarriage may be reduced or terminated upon the establishment of equivalent equitable circumstances as described in this paragraph. The existence of a conjugal relationship, though it may be relevant to the nature and extent of the relationship, is



not necessary for the application of the provisions of this paragraph.

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- (c) An obligor's subsequent remarriage or cohabitation does not constitute a basis for either party to seek a modification of an alimony award. An obligee may not seek modification to increase an award of alimony based on the income and assets of the obligor's subsequent spouse or person with whom the obligor resides, and the obligor may not seek modification to reduce an award of alimony based on the obligor's reliance upon the income and assets of the obligor's subsequent spouse or person with whom the obligor resides.
- (12) (a) An alimony award terminates when the obligor reaches full retirement age as determined by the United States Social Security Administration. However, if an obligor reaches full retirement age as determined by the United States Social Security Administration but has not paid durational alimony for a period equal to 50 percent of the length of the marriage, the court may require the obligor to continue to pay durational alimony, not to exceed 50 percent of the length of the marriage, only if the court determines that:
- 1. The party seeking alimony has not reached the minimum age to qualify for social security retirement benefits; and
- 2. As a result of the dissolution of marriage or the termination of alimony payments under this paragraph, the party seeking alimony would, based on the income and assets available after the dissolution of marriage is final, meet the primary qualifications for the Florida Medicaid medically needy program under part III of chapter 409 and the related rules in effect on



March 1, 2020.

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- (b) If an obligor seeks to retire at an age that is reasonable for his or her profession or line of work, but before he or she reaches full retirement age as determined by the United States Social Security Administration, the court may terminate an alimony award if it determines that the obligor's retirement is reasonable. In determining whether the obligor's retirement is reasonable, the court shall consider all of the following:
 - 1. The obligor's age and health.
 - 2. The obligor's motivation for retirement.
- 3. The obligor's profession or line of work and the typical retirement age for that profession or line of work.
- 4. The oblique's needs and necessities of life and the obligor's needs and necessities of life.
- 5. The impact that a termination or reduction of alimony would have on the obligee. In determining the impact, the court must consider any assets accumulated or received by the obligee, including any income generated by such assets, since the final judgment of dissolution of marriage.
- (c) For marriages of 40 years or more, and without regard to an obligor's or obligee's age, the court may order durational alimony for a term up to 10 years beyond the obligor's full social security retirement age.
- (d) Up to 12 months before the obligor's anticipated retirement under paragraph (a) or paragraph (b), the obligor may file a petition to modify or terminate the alimony award, effective upon his or her actual retirement date. The court shall modify or terminate the alimony award after the obligor's

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retirement unless the court makes written findings of fact under paragraph (b) that the obligor's retirement is not reasonable.

- (13) Any amount of social security or disability benefits or retirement payments received by an oblique subsequent to an initial award of alimony constitutes a change in circumstances for which an obligor may seek modification of an alimony award.
- (14) Agreements on alimony payments, voluntary or pursuant to a court order, which allow for modification or termination of alimony by virtue of either party reaching a certain age, income, or other threshold, or agreements that establish a limited period of time after which alimony is modifiable, are considered agreements that are expressly modifiable or eligible for termination for purposes of this section once the specified condition is met.

Section 4. Section 61.19, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

- 61.19 Entry of judgment of dissolution of marriage; delay period; separate adjudication of issues.-
- (1) A No final judgment of dissolution of marriage may not be entered until at least 20 days have elapsed from the date of filing the original petition for dissolution of marriage, + but the court, on a showing that injustice would result from this delay, may enter a final judgment of dissolution of marriage at an earlier date.
- (2) If more than 365 days have elapsed after the date of service of the original petition for dissolution of marriage, absent a showing by either party that irreparable harm will result from granting a final judgment of dissolution of marriage, the court shall, upon request of either party, grant a



final judgment of dissolution of marriage with a reservation of jurisdiction to subsequently determine all other substantive issues. Before granting the judgment, the court shall enter temporary orders necessary to protect the parties and their children, which orders remain effective until all other issues can be adjudicated by the court. This subsection applies to all petitions for dissolution of marriage filed on or after July 1, 2021.

Section 5. The court shall apply this act to any action pending on or after July 1, 2021.

Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

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========= T I T L E A M E N D M E N T === And the title is amended as follows:

Delete everything before the enacting clause and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to dissolution of marriage; amending s. 61.046, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "income"; amending s. 61.08, F.S.; defining terms; requiring the court to prioritize certain forms of alimony; authorizing the court to grant permanent alimony under certain circumstances; requiring the court to make certain written findings in its awards of alimony; prohibiting the court from denying or granting an award of alimony solely on the basis of adultery, with an exception; revising factors that the court must consider in determining the proper type and amount of alimony; authorizing a party to whom the

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court has awarded alimony to purchase or maintain a life insurance policy on the obligor's life to protect an award of alimony; requiring the obligor to cooperate in the process of securing the life insurance; deleting certain rebuttable presumptions related to the duration of a marriage for purposes of determining alimony; prohibiting an award of rehabilitative alimony from exceeding specified timeframes; revising a provision authorizing the modification of rehabilitative alimony upon completion of the rehabilitative plan to include a certain timeframe; revising provisions related to durational alimony; prohibiting the length of an award of durational alimony from exceeding a specified timeframe; specifying what constitutes the length of a marriage for the purpose of determining durational alimony; requiring the court to make certain written findings when awarding durational alimony; providing a formula for the calculation of durational alimony; providing that a party who has reached retirement age in accordance with specified provisions may not be ordered to pay alimony; providing an exception; establishing that alimony may not be awarded to a party who has a certain monthly net income; prohibiting social security retirement benefits from being imputed to the obligor, with an exception; requiring an obligee to meet certain requirements if he or she alleges that a physical disability has impaired his or her ability to earn the imputed

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income; requiring the court to consider certain payments made to the oblique when determining the amount and length of rehabilitative or durational alimony; amending s. 61.14, F.S.; authorizing the court to order an obligee to reimburse alimony payments to the obligor under certain circumstances; specifying a timeframe for the court to consider a supportive relationship between the oblique and another person for purposes of reducing or terminating an award of alimony or ordering reimbursement of alimony payments; revising factors the court may consider when determining whether a supportive relationship exists or existed between the oblique and another person; providing that an obligor's subsequent remarriage or cohabitation is not a basis for modification of alimony; providing that the income and assets of the obligor's subsequent spouse are irrelevant to an action for modification of alimony; requiring an alimony obligation to terminate upon the obligor reaching full retirement age; providing an exception; authorizing the court to terminate an alimony obligation if the obligor retires at a reasonable age for his or her profession or line of work; requiring the court to consider certain factors in determining whether the obligor's retirement age is reasonable; authorizing the court to order durational alimony beyond the obligor's full social security retirement age under certain circumstances; authorizing an obligor to prospectively file a

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petition for modification or termination of alimony, effective upon his or her retirement; requiring a court to modify or terminate an alimony award upon retirement of the obligor, with an exception; providing that certain benefits of the obligee constitute a change in circumstance for which an obligor may seek modification of an alimony award; providing that certain agreements on alimony payments are considered expressly modifiable or eligible for termination under certain circumstances; amending s. 61.19, F.S.; requiring the court to grant a final judgment of dissolution of marriage and reserve jurisdiction to adjudicate other substantive issues, under certain circumstances; providing for temporary orders necessary to protect the parties and their children, if any; providing that such temporary orders are effective until all other issues are adjudicated by the court; providing applicability; providing an effective date.