

By Senator Burgess

20-01740B-22

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to the Veteran Suicide Prevention  
3       Training Pilot Program; creating s. 394.9088, F.S.;  
4       requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs to  
5       establish the pilot program; providing the purpose of  
6       the pilot program; requiring pilot program  
7       participants to receive certain training; requiring  
8       the department to contract with an organization to  
9       develop the curriculum for such training; requiring  
10      the department to establish and oversee the  
11      participant certification process; requiring the  
12      department to adopt rules; requiring the department to  
13      submit an annual report to the Legislature by a  
14      specified date; providing an appropriation; providing  
15      an effective date.

16  
17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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19       Section 1. Section 394.9088, Florida Statutes, is created  
20 to read:

21       394.9088 Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot  
22 Program.—

23       (1) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall establish the  
24 Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program. The purpose  
25 of the pilot program is to offer to each Department of Veterans'  
26 Affairs claims examiner and each county and city veteran service  
27 officer, as described in s. 292.11, specialized training and  
28 certification in the prevention of veteran suicide.

29       (2) Individuals electing to participate in the pilot

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30 program must be trained to identify indicators of elevated  
31 suicide risk and provide emergency crisis referrals for veterans  
32 expressing or exhibiting symptoms of emotional or psychological  
33 distress. The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall contract  
34 with an organization having proven experience developing and  
35 implementing veteran-relevant and evidence-based suicide  
36 prevention training to develop the curriculum for such training.  
37 The department shall establish and oversee the process for  
38 certifying program participants who successfully complete such  
39 training.

40 (3) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall adopt rules  
41 necessary to implement the pilot program.

42 (4) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall submit a  
43 report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the  
44 House of Representatives by June 30 of each year which includes  
45 information concerning the pilot program and whether any changes  
46 should be made to the pilot program which would increase its  
47 effectiveness. In its report submitted by June 30, 2026, the  
48 department shall include a recommendation of whether the pilot  
49 program should be continued.

50 Section 2. The sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is  
51 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of  
52 Veterans' Affairs for the purpose of implementing this act.

53 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.