

By Senator Cruz

18-00072-22

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to educational opportunities for
3 disabled veterans; creating s. 295.011, F.S.; defining
4 the term "disabled veteran"; providing that disabled
5 veterans receiving certain federal educational
6 assistance benefits are eligible to receive a waiver
7 for the remaining cost of tuition and fees at certain
8 institutions; requiring certain institutions to submit
9 an annual report to the Board of Governors and the
10 State Board of Education; requiring the boards to
11 respectively adopt regulations and rules; specifying
12 applicability of other laws; providing an effective
13 date.

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15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. Section 295.011, Florida Statutes, is created to
18 read:

19 295.011 Disabled veterans; education.-

20 (1) As used in this section, the term "disabled veteran"
21 means an individual who is a resident of this state pursuant to
22 s. 1009.21 and is:

23 (a) Determined by the United States Department of Veterans
24 Affairs to have a service-connected total and permanent
25 disability rating of 100 percent for compensation;

26 (b) Determined to have a service-connected total and
27 permanent disability rating of 100 percent and is in receipt of
28 disability retirement pay from any branch of the United States
29 Armed Services; or

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30 (c) Issued a valid identification card by the Florida
31 Department of Veterans' Affairs pursuant to s. 295.17.

32 (2) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a disabled
33 veteran who receives a tuition benefit to attend a state
34 university, a Florida College System institution, a career
35 center operated by a school district under s. 1001.44, or a
36 charter technical career center under the Post-9/11 Veterans
37 Educational Assistance Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-252, but who
38 does not qualify for the 100 percent eligibility tier under
39 federal law, is eligible to receive a waiver for tuition and
40 fees which is equal to the amount that is the difference between
41 the portion of tuition and fees paid in accordance with federal
42 law and the full amount of tuition and fees at the institution
43 attended.

44 (a) Each state university, Florida College System
45 institution, career center operated by a school district under
46 s. 1001.44, and charter technical career center shall report to
47 the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education,
48 respectively, the number and value of all fee waivers granted
49 annually under this subsection.

50 (b) The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education
51 shall respectively adopt regulations and rules to administer
52 this subsection.

53 (3) Sections 295.03, 295.04, 295.05, and 1009.40 apply to
54 any disabled veteran who receives an award under this section.

55 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.