

By the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security; and Senator Cruz

583-01959-22

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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; providing a calculation for waiver  
9           amounts; requiring the amount awarded by the state to  
10          be contingent on the application of specified federal  
11          benefits; requiring certain institutions to submit an  
12          annual report to the Board of Governors and the State  
13          Board of Education; requiring the boards to  
14          respectively adopt regulations and rules; specifying  
15          applicability of other laws; providing an effective  
16          date.

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

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20           Section 1. Section 295.011, Florida Statutes, is created to  
21           read:

22           295.011 Disabled veterans; education.-

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

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

29           (b) Determined to have a service-connected total and

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30 permanent disability rating of 100 percent and is in receipt of  
31 disability retirement pay from any branch of the United States  
32 Armed Services; or

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

35 (2) Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a disabled  
36 veteran enrolled in a program of education approved for  
37 educational assistance under 38 U.S.C. s. 3313, at a state  
38 university, a Florida College System institution, a career  
39 center operated by a school district under s. 1001.44, or a  
40 charter technical career center who does not qualify for the 100  
41 percent eligibility tier under federal law is eligible to  
42 receive a waiver for tuition and fees. The waiver amount is  
43 equal to the difference between the portion of tuition and fees  
44 paid in accordance with federal law and the full amount of  
45 tuition and fees at the institution attended. The amount awarded  
46 by the state is not to be determined until after the application  
47 of federal benefits under 38 U.S.C. s. 3313.

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

54 (b) The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education  
55 shall respectively adopt regulations and rules to administer  
56 this subsection.

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

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