

By Senator Wright

8-00949-23

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Florida National Guard recruitment;
3 establishing the Florida National Guard Joint
4 Enlistment Enhancement Program within the Department
5 of Military Affairs; providing the purpose of the
6 program; defining the term "recruiting assistant";
7 providing eligibility requirements for participation
8 in the program; requiring the Adjutant General to
9 provide compensation to recruiting assistants under
10 certain circumstances; requiring the department and
11 the Florida National Guard to adopt rules; providing
12 an appropriation; providing an effective date.

13
14 WHEREAS, the number of soldiers and airmen allocated to
15 each state's National Guard, known as its "force structure," is
16 determined by the United States National Guard Bureau in
17 Washington, D.C., and

18 WHEREAS, with approximately 21 million residents, Florida
19 is the third most populous state in the nation but has a force
20 structure of just over 12,000 guard members, and its ratio of
21 one guard member for every 1,833 residents ranks 53rd among the
22 54 states and territories of the United States which each have a
23 National Guard component, and

24 WHEREAS, the Florida National Guard continues to meet its
25 mission goals; however, the shortage of these invaluable citizen
26 soldiers, combined with this state's growing population and
27 increased need for National Guard activation and response, has
28 resulted in the repeated deployment of the same soldiers, which
29 ultimately leads to their excessive fatigue and negatively

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30 impacts recruitment, retention, and readiness, NOW, THEREFORE,
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32 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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34 Section 1. Florida National Guard Joint Enlistment
35 Enhancement Program.—

36 (1) The Florida National Guard Joint Enlistment Enhancement
37 Program (JEEP) is established within the Department of Military
38 Affairs. The purpose of the program is to motivate soldiers,
39 airmen, and retirees of the Florida National Guard to bolster
40 recruitment efforts and increase the force structure of the
41 Florida National Guard.

42 (2) As used in this section, the term "recruiting
43 assistant" means a member of the Florida National Guard or a
44 retiree of the Florida National Guard who assists in the
45 recruitment of a potential new member and who provides
46 motivation, encouragement, and moral support until the
47 enlistment of such new member. A current member in pay grade E-1
48 to O-3 or a retiree in any pay grade is eligible for
49 participation in JEEP as a recruiting assistant.

50 (3) The Adjutant General shall provide compensation to
51 recruiting assistants participating in JEEP. A recruiting
52 assistant shall receive \$250 for each potential new member
53 referred to the Florida National Guard and \$250 upon the
54 enlistment of such referred member.

55 (4) The Department of Military Affairs, in cooperation with
56 the Florida National Guard, shall adopt rules to administer the
57 program.

58 Section 2. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the sum of

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59 \$70,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General
60 Revenue Fund to the Department of Military Affairs for the
61 purpose of implementing this act.

62 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.