CS/HB 635 2023

1 A bill to be entitled 2 An act relating to dental services for veterans; 3 creating s. 295.157, F.S.; providing legislative 4 findings and intent; defining terms; establishing the 5 Veterans Dental Care Grant Program in the Department 6 of Veterans' Affairs; specifying the purpose of the 7 program; requiring the department to contract with a 8 direct-support organization to administer the program; 9 requiring the department to adopt rules; providing that program funding is subject to legislative 10 11 appropriation; providing an effective date. 12 13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida: 14 15 Section 1. Section 295.157, Florida Statutes, is created 16 to read: 17 295.157 Veterans Dental Care Grant Program.-18 The Legislature finds that veterans are not afforded 19 dental care after serving in the United States Armed Forces 20 unless they are totally and permanently disabled or have a 21 direct service-connected injury impacting their oral health. The 22 Legislature further finds that this has left many veterans 23 without access to routine dental care for many years and has 24 resulted in severe dental conditions that worsen due to a lack of access to proper dental treatment. It is the intent of the 25

Page 1 of 3

CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.

CS/HB 635 2023

Legislature to create the Veterans Dental Care Grant Program to provide veterans the opportunity to access routine dental care after they conclude their service protecting this country's freedom.

(2) As used in this section, the term:

- (a) "Department" means the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- (b) "Veteran" has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14). The term includes all members of the Florida National Guard and United States Reserve Forces who were discharged or released under honorable conditions only, or who later received an upgraded discharge under honorable conditions.
- (3) The Veterans Dental Care Grant Program is established within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The purpose of the program is to provide oral health care to veterans who reside in this state.
- (4) The department shall contract with a statewide direct-support organization to administer the Veterans Dental Care
 Grant Program. The statewide direct-support organization must
 have proven experience developing and implementing veteranrelevant programs, including dental service programs. The
 organization is responsible for distributing grants to eligible
 nonprofits that have experience in providing dental care to
 veterans.
 - (5) The department shall adopt rules to administer the

Page 2 of 3

CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.

CS/HB 635 2023

51	prog	ram.													
52		(6)	Func	ding	for	the	progra	am is	subjec	t to	appı	ropria	ation	bу	
53	the	Legis	latur	<u>се.</u>											
54		Sect	ion 2	2.	This	act	shall	take	effect	July	1,	2023			
										_	ŕ				

Page 3 of 3

CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.