

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 1329 Veterans

SPONSOR(S): Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee, Redondo, Alvarez and others

TIED BILLS: IDEN./SIM. BILLS: CS/SB 1666

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Local Administration, Federal Affairs & Special Districts Subcommittee	15 Y, 0 N, As CS	Mwakyanjala	Darden
2) Appropriations Committee	26 Y, 0 N	Aderibigbe	Pridgeon
3) State Affairs Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Florida is home to 21 military installations and more than 69,000 military personnel. Florida also has the nation's third-largest veteran population with almost 1.5 million veterans. Many of these veterans are recently transitioned servicemembers. Each year, about 250,000 servicemembers end military service as veterans and either reenter the civilian workforce or enroll in higher education.

The bill revises provisions relating to veterans and the transition of veterans to civilian life by:

- Expanding employment outreach, marketing, and support services activities of Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida);
- Revising the appointment process for the governing board of Veterans Florida;
- Providing definitions for terms used in law relating to Veterans Florida and the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program (VETSP);
- Revising the duties of Veterans Florida relating to the administration of VETSP;
- Allowing an educational stipend for veterans while training at specified locations;
- Expanding the role of Veterans Florida in assisting with industry certification;
- Prohibiting the Department of State from charging veterans who are residents of the state various filing fees;
- Creating an exemption from fees related to hunting and fishing permits and licenses for certain disabled veterans;
- Revising the structure, appointment of members, and frequency of meetings of the Advisory Council on Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries; and
- Adding required instructional material for middle and high school students.

The bill has an indeterminate negative fiscal impact that can be absorbed within existing resources.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2024.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

SkillBridge Program

The Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program grants servicemembers¹ an opportunity to “gain valuable civilian work experience through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships” by matching civilian opportunities to a servicemember’s job training and work experience.² The goal of providing these opportunities is to enhance the servicemember’s marketability and post-separation career prospects following separation from duty.³ Servicemembers are eligible for the program regardless of rank. Military spouses and veterans may also participate in programs with some partners; however, the DoD will not provide pay, allowances, benefits, or other program support to the military spouse or veteran.⁴

The servicemember is permitted to use up to the last 180 days of service to train and learn with an industry partner that best matches that applicant’s job training and work experience. The training must offer the servicemember a high probability of employment. Throughout the SkillBridge program partnership, the servicemember continues to receive military compensation and benefits. Eligibility for the SkillBridge program is mission-dependent and must be authorized by the unit commander prior to entering into any agreement with interested industry employment partners.⁵

Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs

The Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs (FDVA) is a nearly 1,500-member constitutionally chartered⁶ department with a budget of \$201 million for FY 2023-24.⁷ FDVA operates a network of nine state veterans’ homes and provides statewide outreach to connect veterans and their spouses with services, benefits and support.⁸ FDVA is currently required to provide benefits and services in the fields of health care, mental health and substance abuse, claims support, education, employment, housing, burial benefits, and legal assistance to veterans and their spouses.⁹ Current law does not require FDVA to provide these benefits and services to the spouses of veterans.

Each year, about 250,000 servicemembers end military service as veterans and either reenter the civilian workforce or enroll in higher education.¹⁰ Florida is home to 21 military installations¹¹ and

¹ The term “servicemember” is generally referred to as being on “active duty.” 10 USC s. 101 defines “active duty” as full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. The term includes full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service. The term does not include full-time National Guard duty.

² Dept. of Defense, SkillBridge, *Program Overview*, <https://skillbridge.osd.mil/program-overview.htm> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

³ Dept. of Defense, SkillBridge, *Military Members*, <https://skillbridge.osd.mil/military-members.htm> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

⁴ Dept. of Defense, SkillBridge, *Frequently Asked Questions*, <https://skillbridge.osd.mil/faq.htm> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

⁵ *Supra* note 3.

⁶ Art. IV, s. 11, Fla. Const.

⁷ Ch. 2023-239, Laws of Fla., pg. 143.

⁸ Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, *Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs – Our Vision and Mission*, <https://www.floridavets.org/leadership/> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

⁹ Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, *Benefits & Services*, <https://www.floridavets.org/benefits-services/> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Your VA Transition Assistance Program (TAP)*, <https://www.benefits.va.gov/transition/tap.asp> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

¹¹ Select Florida, *Defense & Homeland Security, 2*, <https://selectflorida.org/wp-content/uploads/defense-and-homeland-security-industry-profile.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

69,290 military personnel.¹² Florida also has the nation's third-largest veteran¹³ population with almost 1.4 million veterans.¹⁴ Many of these veterans are recently transitioned servicemembers.

Veterans Florida

Florida is for Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida),¹⁵ a non-profit corporation within the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, was created to promote Florida as a veteran-friendly state.¹⁶ Veterans Florida encourages and assists retired and recently separated military personnel to keep or make Florida their permanent residence, helps equip veterans for employment opportunities, and promotes the hiring of veterans.¹⁷ In fiscal year 2022-2023, Veterans Florida assisted 2,307 veterans with career assistance and job placement.¹⁸ Current law does not require Veterans Florida to provide assistance or services to the spouses of veterans.

Veterans Florida is governed by a nine-member board of directors (Board). The Governor, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives each appoint three members to the Board. Members serve four-year staggered terms and each member may be reappointed to another four-year term once. Vacancies are filled in the same manner of appointment and members of the Board are not compensated but may be reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses.¹⁹

Duties of Veterans Florida include:

- Contracting with at least one entity to research and identify the target market and the educational and employment needs of veterans and their spouses;
- Advising the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation regarding:
 - The target market;
 - Developing and implementing a marketing campaign to encourage servicemembers to remain in Florida or make Florida their permanent residence; and
 - Methods for disseminating information to the target market that relate to interests and needs of veterans and their spouses and facilitate veterans' knowledge of and access to benefits;
- Promoting and enhancing the value of military skill sets to businesses;
- Implementing and administering the Veterans Employment and Training Services Program;
- Managing all appropriated funds to ensure the use of such funds conforms to all applicable laws, bylaws, or contractual requirements; and
- Serve as the state's principal assistance organization under the United States Department of Defense's SkillBridge program for employers and transitioning service members.²⁰

¹² Data from September 2021. Florida Military & Defense, *Economic Impact Summary* (2022), 2, available at <https://selectflorida.org/wp-content/uploads/Florida-2022-EIS-Summary-Book-Final.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

¹³ S. 1.01(14), F.S., defines a "veteran" as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released under honorable conditions, or who later received an upgraded discharge under honorable conditions. The definition in s. 1.01(14), F.S., is cited in numerous statutes, including ss. 117.02, 265.003, 292.055, 295.02, 295.07, 295.187, 295.188, 296.02, 296.08, 296.33, 296.36, 409.1664, 548.06, 943.17, and 1009.26, F.S.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, *VetPop2020 by State, Age Group, Gender, 2020-2050*, available at https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp (last visited Jan. 25, 2024). The Veteran Population Projection Model 2020 (VetPop2020) provides an official veteran population projection from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

¹⁵ In 2015, the Florida is for Veterans, Inc., Board of Directors approved the fictitious name "Veterans Florida" and rebranded as such. See <http://dos.sunbiz.org/scripts/ficidet.exe?action=DETREG&docnum=G15000027981&rdocnum=G15000027981> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024). See also s. 295.21(5)(e), F.S.

¹⁶ S. 295.21(1), F.S.

¹⁷ S. 295.21(2), F.S.

¹⁸ Veterans Florida, *Annual Report* (2023), 15, https://www.veteransflorida.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/FIFV-Annual-Report-2023_.pdf (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

¹⁹ S. 295.21(4), F.S.

²⁰ S. 295.21(3), F.S.

Veterans Employment and Training Services Program (VETSP)

Veterans Florida administers VETSP to assist in connecting veterans in search of employment with businesses seeking to hire dedicated, well-trained workers.²¹ The purpose of the program is to meet the workforce demands of businesses in the state by facilitating access to training and education in high-demand fields for veterans or their spouses.²²

Functions of the program include:

- Conducting marketing and recruiting efforts directed at veterans or their spouses who are seeking employment and who reside in or who have an interest in relocating to Florida;
- Assisting veterans or their spouses seeking employment who reside in Florida or who relocate to Florida;
- Assisting Florida businesses in recruiting and hiring veterans and their spouses;
- Creating a grant program to provide funding to assist veterans in meeting the workforce-skill needs of businesses seeking to hire, promote, or generally improve specialized skills of veterans, establishing criteria for approval of requests for funding, and maximizing the use of funding for the grant program;²³
 - Costs and expenditures for each veteran trainee is capped at \$8,000. Qualified businesses may receive reimbursement equal to 50 percent of the cost to train a permanently, full-time employed veteran, however the business must cover the entire cost of the training initially. Eligible costs and expenditures that may be reimbursed include:
 - Tuition and fees;
 - Books and classroom materials; and
 - Rental fees for facilities.
- Contracting with one or more entities to administer an entrepreneur initiative program for veterans in Florida that connects business leaders with veterans seeking to become entrepreneurs.²⁴

Advisory Council on Brain and Spinal Cord Injuries (Council)

The Council is part of the Florida Department of Health (Health) and administers the Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program (BSCIP). BSCIP's purpose is to provide all eligible residents²⁵ who sustain a traumatic brain or spinal cord injury the opportunity to obtain the necessary services that will enable them to return to an appropriate level of functioning in their community.²⁶

The Council is a 16-member body appointed by the state Surgeon General, comprised of:

- Four members must have a brain injury or are family members of individuals who have a brain injury;
- Four members must have a spinal cord injury or are family members of individuals who have a spinal cord injury;
- Two members who represent the special needs children who have a brain or spinal cord injury; and
- Six members who physicians, other allied health professionals, administrators of brain and spinal cord injury programs, or representatives from support groups that have expertise in areas related to the rehabilitation of individuals who have brain or spinal cord injuries.²⁷

²¹ S. 295.22, F.S.

²² S. 295.22(2), F.S.

²³ Grant funds may only be used in the absence of available veteran-specific federally funded programs. S. 295.22(3)(d), F.S.

²⁴ S. 295.22(3), F.S.

²⁵ All hospitals, attending physicians, public, private, or social agencies must refer all new traumatic moderate-to-severe brain or spinal cord injuries to the Department of Health's (Central Registry). S. 381.74, F.S. Caseworkers within the Central Registry work with affected individuals and their families and determine which individuals meet the eligibility criteria and require services and supports to sustain their health and safety. Fla. Dept. of Health, *Central Registry*, <https://www.floridahealth.gov/provider-and-partner-resources/brain-and-spinal-cord-injury-program/applicants/central-registry.html> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

²⁶ Fla. Dept. of Health, *Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Program*, <https://www.floridahealth.gov/provider-and-partner-resources/brain-and-spinal-cord-injury-program/index.html> (last visited Jan. 26, 2024).

²⁷ S. 381.78(1), F.S.

Members of the Council serve four-year terms. Members may not serve more than two terms, however if a vacancy occurs for a member with less than 18 months remaining in their term, the member appointed to fill the vacancy may be reappointed twice.²⁸ The Council meets at least twice annually and provides advice and expertise to Health in the preparation, implementation, and periodic review of the BSCIP.²⁹ Members of the Council are not compensated but may be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses.³⁰

Department of State (DOS) and Incorporation

The DOS is responsible for receiving and maintaining incorporation and business filings required in law, such as service of process for legal proceedings,³¹ articles of incorporation,³² and registration of fictitious names.³³ A person who wants to file incorporation and business filings with the DOS must pay the appropriate fee. Amongst the filings received and maintained by the DOS, and the appropriate filing fee associated with them, are those identified in:

- Chapter 605, Florida Revised Limited Liability Company Act: limited liability companies file with the DOS a registration with their name, registered agent, and registered office location;³⁴
- Chapter 607, Florida Business Corporation Act: corporations file their articles of incorporation, changes to their registered office or registered agent, and must file an annual report, among other documents;³⁵
- Chapter 617, Corporations not for profit: requires not for profit corporations to file with the DOS their articles of incorporation, changes to their registered office or registered agent, and must file an annual report, among other documents;³⁶ and
- Chapter 620, Partnership laws: limited partnerships must file a certificate of limited partnership with the DOS containing the name of the limited partnership, the address, and the business address of each general partner³⁷ as well as an annual report, among other documents.³⁸ General partnerships must file a partnership registration statement and an annual report, among other documents.³⁹

Recreational Licenses and Permits

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) regulates hunting and fishing seasons, means of take, bag limits, and areas authorized for hunting or fishing. Florida residents and visitors are required to possess a Florida hunting, freshwater fishing, or saltwater fishing license when engaged in fishing and hunting activities.⁴⁰ Fees for licenses and permits typically range from \$17 to \$151⁴¹ depending on the type and duration of the license, as well as if the individual is a Florida resident.⁴² Certain individuals are exempt from the permitting requirements.⁴³ Individuals can obtain hunting and

²⁸ S. 381.78(2), F.S.

²⁹ S. 381.78(3)-(4), F.S.

³⁰ S. 381.78(5), F.S.

³¹ See, e.g., ss. 48.061, 48.062, and 48.181, F.S.

³² S. 607.0203, F.S.

³³ S. 865.09, F.S.

³⁴ S. 605.0112(5), 605.113(4), and 605.113(5), F.S. See s. 605.0206, F.S.

³⁵ Ss. 607.0203, 607.0502, and 607.1622, F.S. See 607.0120(9), F.S.

³⁶ Ss. 617.0203, 617.0502, and 617.1622, F.S.

³⁷ Ss. 620.1109 and 620.1201(1)(a)-(e), F.S.

³⁸ S. 620.1210, F.S.

³⁹ Ss. 620.8105 and 620.9003, F.S.

⁴⁰ This includes individuals who are aiding in the take. FWC, *Exemptions*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/do-i-need-one/> (last visited Jan. 23, 2024).

⁴¹ Outside of this range, FWC offers a five-year resident gold sportsman's license that includes freshwater fishing, hunting, and saltwater fishing licenses and wildlife management area, archery, muzzleloading gun, crossbow, deer, turkey, Florida waterfowl, snook, and lobster permits for \$494.

⁴² See, FWC, *Recreational Freshwater Licenses & Permits*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/freshwater-fishing/> (last visited January 8, 2024); FWC, *Recreational Saltwater Licenses & Permits*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/saltwater-fishing/> (last visited January 8, 2024); FWC, *Recreational Hunting Licenses & Permits*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/hunting/> (last visited January 8, 2024).

⁴³ See s. 379.353, F.S., for a list of individuals who are exempt from permitting requirements. See also, FWC, *Exemptions*.

<https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/do-i-need-one/> (last visited January 8, 2024).

fishing permits online,⁴⁴ in person at a license agent⁴⁵ or tax collector's office, by calling toll-free numbers, and through the FWC Fish|Hunt FL app.⁴⁶ Licenses expire a year from the date they are issued.⁴⁷

Required Instruction in Florida Schools

The law requires each district school board to provide all courses required for middle grades promotion, high school graduation, and appropriate instruction designed to ensure that students meet State Board of Education (SBE) adopted standards in the following subject areas:

- Reading and other language arts;
- Mathematics;
- Science;
- Social studies;
- Foreign languages;
- Health and physical education; and
- The arts.⁴⁸

In addition, the following specific topics must be taught:

- The history and content of the Declaration of Independence, including national sovereignty, natural law, self-evident truth, equality of all persons, limited government, popular sovereignty, and inalienable rights of life, liberty, and property, and how they form the philosophical foundation of our government.
- The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the U.S. Constitution, with emphasis on the Bill of Rights and how the Constitution provides the structure of our government.
- The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government, as they are embodied in the most important of the Federalist Papers.
- Flag education, including proper flag display and flag salute.
- The elements of civil government, including the primary functions of and interrelationships between the federal government, the state, and its local entities.
- U.S. history, including the period of discovery, early colonies, the War for Independence, the Civil War, the expansion of the United States to its present boundaries, the world wars, and the civil rights movement to the present.
- The history of the Holocaust.
- The history of African Americans, including the history of African peoples before the political conflicts that led to the development of slavery, the passage to America, the enslavement experience, abolition, and the history and contributions of Americans of the African diaspora to society.
- The history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, including the history of Japanese internment camps and the incarceration of Japanese-Americans during World War II; the immigration, citizenship, civil rights, identity, and culture of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; and the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to American society.
- The study of Hispanic contributions to the United States.
- The study of women's contributions to the United States.
- The sacrifices that veterans and Medal of Honor recipients have made in serving our country and protecting democratic values worldwide, with instruction occurring on or before Medal of Honor Day, Veterans' Day, and Memorial Day. Instructional staff is encouraged to use the assistance of local veterans and Medal of Honor recipients.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ FWC, *Go Outdoors Florida – The official Licensing and Permitting site of the FWC!*,

<https://license.gooutdoorsflorida.com/Licensing/AgentLookup.aspx> (last visited January 8, 2024).

⁴⁵ Licensing agents often include bait-and-tackle shops and sports retailers like Wal-Mart and Bass Pro Shop. FWC, *FAQs: Recreational Licenses*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/faqs/> (last visited January 8, 2024). Individuals can look up local agents through FWC's locate an agent portal. FWC, *Locate an Agent*, available at <https://license.gooutdoorsflorida.com/Licensing/LocateAgent.aspx> (last visited January 8, 2024).

⁴⁶ FWC, *How to Order*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/how-to-order/> (last visited January 8, 2024).

⁴⁷ FWC, *FAQs: Recreational Licenses*, <https://myfwc.com/license/recreational/faqs/> (last visited January 8, 2024).

⁴⁸ Ss. 1003.42(1)(a), F.S.

⁴⁹ S. 1003.42(2)(a)-(u), F.S.

Teachers must teach the topics specified in law efficiently and faithfully, using books and materials meeting the highest standards for professionalism and historical accuracy, following the prescribed courses of study, and employing approved methods of instruction.⁵⁰ Unless otherwise specified, the law generally does not prescribe grade level, instructional hours, or instructional materials requirements for these topics.

Effect of Proposed Changes

Veterans Florida

The bill provides that Veterans Florida is to serve as the state's initial point of military transition assistance for veterans and their spouses. The bill directs Veterans Florida to connect veterans or their spouses with opportunities for entrepreneurship education, training, and resources and also inspire the growth and development of veteran-owned small businesses. The bill requires Veterans Florida to conduct marketing and recruiting efforts directed at veterans or their spouses within the target market. The bill provides a definition for "target market" as:

- Members and spouses of members of the United States Armed Forces with 24 months or less until discharge;
- Veterans with 36 months or less since discharge; and
- Members of the Florida National Guard or reserves.

The bill provides that the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives may appoint only one member from the body over which he or she presides. The bill removes the requirement that Veterans Florida must contract with at least one entity to research and identify its target market and the educational and employment needs of veterans and their spouses.

VETSP

The bill provides the following definitions:

- "Secondary industry business" to mean a business that the state has an additional interest in supporting and for which veterans and their spouses may have directly transferrable skills.
- "Spouse" to mean a person who is married to a veteran, or a person who was married to a veteran killed in action and is not remarried.
- "Target industry business" to mean a business that is engaged in one of the target industries identified pursuant to criteria developed by the Department of Commerce.⁵¹
- "Target market" to have the same meaning as the term is used for Veterans Florida programs.

The bill revises the duties of VETSP to focus on efforts within their target market and to assist those veterans and spouses with finding employment in target industries or secondary industries. The bill modifies VETSP's grant program that provides funding to assist veterans in meeting the workforce-skill needs by providing that the program must prioritize funding certificate, license, or nondegree training from the Master Credentials list,⁵² federally created certifications or licenses, and any skills-based industry certifications or licenses deemed relevant or necessary by Veterans Florida. The bill provides that the list of training expenses for which a qualified business may be reimbursed includes, but is not limited to, the items enumerated in statute, but maintains an \$8,000 maximum cost per veteran trainee.

- The bill also provides that grant funds may be used to provide grants to non-active duty members of the United States Armed Forces for educational stipends while training at any location of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences within the state. The bill requires Veterans Florida and the University of Florida to enter into a grant agreement before any use of funds and provides the training must be between four to six months in duration; and

⁵⁰ S. 1003.42(2), F.S.

⁵¹ See s. 288.005(7), F.S., for the criteria developed by Department of Commerce, a list of business activities that would not be included under the term, and qualifying conditions certain businesses must meet in order to be included under the term.

⁵² See s. 445.04(4)(h), F.S.

The bill encourages Veterans Florida to collaborate with state agencies and other entities in order to provide information on a website that links to state agencies and other entities that maintain benefits, services, training, education, and other resources that are available to veterans and their spouses. The bill provides a non-exhaustive list of entities and programs that Veterans Florida is encouraged to collaborate with and promote.

Fees

Department of State

The bill provides that the Department of State may not charge veterans residing within the state fees for filing articles of organization or incorporation, a certificate of limited partnership, a partnership registration statement, or for the designation of a registered agent as required by general law.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation

The bill provides that honorably discharged disabled veterans of the United States who are separated from service and are certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or by any branch of the United States Armed Forces as having a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability do not have to pay a fee in order to be issued a license or permit for hunting, freshwater fishing, or saltwater fishing.

Council

The bill revises the membership of the Council in the following manner:

- Eight members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives:
 - Two members must have a brain injury or are family members of individuals who have a brain injury;
 - Two members must have a spinal cord injury or are family members of individuals who have a spinal cord injury;
 - Two members of the Council to be individuals who have, or who are family members of individuals who have or had, a traumatic injury, chronic encephalopathy, or subconcussive impacts due to sports; and
 - Two veterans who have or have had a traumatic brain injury, chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or subconcussive impacts due to military service, or family members of such veterans.
- Six members shall be appointed by the state Surgeon General who are physicians, other allied health professionals, administrators of brain and spinal cord injury programs, and representatives from support groups that have expertise in areas related to the rehabilitation of individuals who have brain or spinal cord injuries.

The bill provides that members shall serve staggered four-year terms of office, requires the Council to meet quarterly basis, and provides that Council meetings may only adjourn via unanimous consent.

Required Instruction

The bill requires instruction on the history and importance of Veterans' Day and Memorial Day including two 45-minute lessons that occur on or before the respective holidays.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 295.21, F.S., relating to Veterans Florida.

Section 2: Amends s. 295.22, F.S., relating to VETSP.

Section 3: Creates s. 295.25, F.S., providing an exemption for certain filing fees.

Section 4: Amends s. 379.353, F.S., providing an exemption for certain recreational licenses and permits.

Section 5: Amends s. 381.78, F.S., relating to the Council.

Section 6: Amends s. 1003.42, F.S., relating to required instruction.

- Section 7:** Amends s. 288.0001, F.S., relating to economic development programs evaluation.
Section 8: Reenacting s. 379.3581, F.S., relating to hunter safety courses.
Section 9: Reenacting s. 379.401, F.S., relating to FWC penalties and violations.
Section 10: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2024.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

FWC and the Department of State would lose some revenue typically generated from fees due the exemptions provided for by the bill. The anticipated impact is indeterminant but likely insignificant and can be absorbed within existing resources.

2. Expenditures:

Veterans Florida may have to expend additional funds in order to implement the expansion of duties provided for by the bill. Additional educational support may be needed in order to carry out the required educational instructions provided for by the bill.

The Legislature provides annual funding for Veterans Florida each year in the General Appropriations Act (GAA). The House proposed GAA for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 includes \$2 million in nonrecurring funds for Veterans Florida.

Public schools may experience an indeterminant, likely insignificant fiscal impact with curriculum to teach the required two 45-minute lessons on the history and importance of Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

The FWC and Department of State revenues provided for by the bill will have a positive fiscal impact on those who qualify.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:

The bill neither authorizes nor requires rulemaking by executive branch agencies.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.