

By Senator Garcia

36-01216-24

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1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to grants for victims of political  
3 discrimination; creating s. 17.691, F.S.; defining the  
4 term "qualified person"; requiring that a specified  
5 trust fund be used to provide grants to qualified  
6 persons to pay for specified expenses; providing  
7 construction; requiring the Department of Financial  
8 Services to distribute grants in a specified manner;  
9 providing the maximum amount that a qualified person  
10 may receive; requiring the department to adopt rules;  
11 authorizing emergency rulemaking; providing a  
12 contingent effective date.

13  
14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

15  
16 Section 1. Section 17.691, Florida Statutes, is created to  
17 read:

18 17.691 Authorized use of Defending Freedom Fighters Trust  
19 Fund.—

20 (1) For purposes of this section, the term "qualified  
21 person" means a person who:

22 (a) Meets the presidential eligibility requirements of s.  
23 1, Art. II of the United States Constitution.

24 (b) Is a legal resident of the state as defined in s.  
25 1009.21(1) or has a valid driver license issued under s. 322.18.

26 (c) Complies with chapter 106 and federal election law.

27 (2) Funds from the Defending Freedom Fighters Trust Fund  
28 created under s. 17.69 must be used to provide grants to  
29 qualified persons subject to political discrimination to pay for

36-01216-24

20241740\_\_

30 legal fees incurred as a result of criminal charges brought by a  
31 U.S. public entity as defined in 31 U.S.C. s. 802.243. For  
32 purposes of this subsection, the department has the sole  
33 authority to determine if a person has been subject to political  
34 discrimination.

35 (3) The department shall distribute grants to a qualified  
36 person in an efficient manner, prioritizing funding based on the  
37 severity of criminal charges and the causal connection between  
38 the charges and the political affiliation of the qualified  
39 person.

40 (4) Subject to the availability of funds, a qualified  
41 person may receive up to \$5 million under this section.

42 (5) The department shall adopt rules to administer this  
43 section.

44 Section 2. The Department of Revenue is authorized, and all  
45 conditions are deemed met, to adopt emergency rules pursuant to  
46 s. 120.54(4), Florida Statutes, for the purpose of implementing  
47 this act.

48 Section 3. This act shall take effect on the same date that  
49 SB \_\_\_\_ or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation  
50 is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension  
51 thereof and becomes a law.