

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

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30 requirements, beginning on a specified date; providing  
31 an effective date.

32  
33 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

34  
35 Section 1. Paragraph (cc) is added to subsection (8) of  
36 section 213.053, Florida Statutes, to read:

37 213.053 Confidentiality and information sharing.—

38 (8) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section,  
39 the department may provide:

40 (cc) State tax information relative to the exemptions in s.  
41 295.189(5) pursuant to any formal agreement for the mutual  
42 exchange of information between the Department of Veterans'  
43 Affairs, the Department of State, and the Department of Revenue.

44  
45 Disclosure of information under this subsection shall be  
46 pursuant to a written agreement between the executive director  
47 and the agency. Such agencies, governmental or nongovernmental,  
48 shall be bound by the same requirements of confidentiality as  
49 the Department of Revenue. Breach of confidentiality is a  
50 misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided by s.  
51 775.082 or s. 775.083.

52 Section 2. Section 295.189, Florida Statutes, is created to  
53 read:

54 295.189 Business development incentives for veterans and  
55 military spouses.—

56 (1) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "Florida  
57 Veterans and Military Spouses Business Development Act."

58 (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

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59       (a) The Legislature finds that veterans and military  
60 spouses contribute significantly to this state's economy through  
61 their skills, expertise, and entrepreneurial efforts.

62       (b) The Legislature recognizes the challenges of frequent  
63 relocations and economic instability faced by many military  
64 spouses.

65       (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that this act serve  
66 to attract and support veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
67 businesses by providing incentives.

68       (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

69       (a) "Military spouse" means a spouse of:

70       1. An active duty member of the United States Armed Forces;

71 or

72       2. A veteran.

73       (b) "Veteran" has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14).

74       (c) "Veteran-owned or military spouse-owned business" means  
75 any business entity:

76       1. That employs 200 or fewer permanent full-time employees.

77       2. That, together with its affiliates, has a net worth of

78 \$5 million or less or, if a sole proprietorship, has a net worth  
79 of \$5 million or less including personal and business  
80 investments.

81       3. That is domiciled in this state.

82       4. That is at least 51 percent owned and operated by one or  
83 more veterans or military spouses.

84       5. The management and daily business operations of which  
85 are controlled by one or more veterans or military spouses.

86       6. That has a professional license, if required by the  
87 industry, in the name of a veteran or military spouse who owns

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88 the business entity.89 (4) FEE WAIVER.-90 (a) The Department of State shall waive all fees for:91 1. A new business established by a veteran or military  
92 spouse in this state.93 2. An existing veteran-owned or military spouse-owned  
94 business in this state.95 (b) The fee waivers apply to veteran-owned or military  
96 spouse-owned businesses established between July 1, 2026, and  
97 June 30, 2031.98 (5) TAX EXEMPTIONS.-99 (a) Eligible veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
100 businesses shall receive:101 1. A temporary increase in the exemption provided by s.  
102 220.14 for business entities incorporated in this state and  
103 subject to the tax imposed by chapter 220, for the taxable year  
104 in which the Department of Veterans' Affairs verifies the  
105 veteran-owned or military spouse-owned business pursuant to  
106 subsection (7) and for each of the 4 subsequent taxable years.107 a. A business that is 100 percent veteran-owned or military  
108 spouse-owned is eligible to receive an exemption from the tax  
109 imposed by chapter 220, totaling \$100,000 per taxable year for 5  
110 taxable years, after being in business for at least 5 years from  
111 the date of its incorporation in this state.112 b. A business that is at least 51 percent veteran-owned or  
113 military spouse-owned but does not qualify for the tax exemption  
114 under sub subparagraph a. is eligible to receive an exemption  
115 from the tax imposed by chapter 220, totaling \$100,000 per  
116 taxable year for 5 taxable years, after being in business for at

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117 least 7 years from the date of its incorporation in this state.

118 2. A one-time sales tax exemption for veteran-owned or  
119 military spouse-owned businesses for purchases of equipment and  
120 supplies directly related to and used for business operations.  
121 This exemption does not apply to purchases of items that are  
122 used for personal purposes or items used for both personal and  
123 business purposes.

124 a. A business entity that is at least 51 percent veteran-  
125 owned or military spouse-owned is eligible to receive the sales  
126 tax exemption during the first year of business upon the  
127 issuance of a temporary tax exemption certificate by the  
128 Department of Revenue.

129 b. A business entity incorporated in this state and subject  
130 to the tax imposed by chapter 220 which is 100 percent veteran-  
131 owned or military spouse-owned and has been in business for 5  
132 years and whose net income as reported on its Florida corporate  
133 income or franchise tax return after application of the  
134 exemption provided in s. 220.14 is \$0 for the 5th taxable year  
135 is eligible to receive the 1-year sales tax exemption upon the  
136 issuance of a temporary tax certificate by the Department of  
137 Revenue.

138 c. A business entity incorporated in this state and subject  
139 to the tax imposed by chapter 220 which is at least 51 percent  
140 veteran-owned or military spouse-owned and has been in business  
141 for 7 years and whose net income as reported on its Florida  
142 corporate income or franchise tax return is \$0 for the 7th  
143 taxable year is eligible to receive the 1-year sales tax  
144 exemption upon the issuance of a temporary tax exemption  
145 certificate by the Department of Revenue.

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146        (b) The Department of Revenue shall adopt rules to  
147        establish procedures for claiming the tax exemptions and for the  
148        developing and issuing of temporary sales tax exemption  
149        certificates upon notification of application approval by the  
150        Department of Veterans' Affairs.

151        (c) For veteran-owned and military spouse-owned businesses  
152        relocating to this state, the tax exemptions apply for 5 years  
153        after the date on which the business is established.

154        (6) ADMINISTRATION.—The Department of Veterans' Affairs,  
155        the Department of Revenue, and the Department of State shall:

156        (a) Develop rules for administering this section.  
157        (b) Ensure interagency cooperation for seamless  
158        implementation of this section.

159        (7) REGISTRATION.—  
160        (a) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall establish  
161        registration requirements for applicants seeking the fee waivers  
162        and tax exemptions provided by this section. The registration  
163        requirements must include:

164        1. For veterans, a DD Form 214 or another acceptable form  
165        of identification as specified by the United States Department  
166        of Veterans' Affairs, provided that the applicant served in and  
167        was honorably discharged from a branch of the United States  
168        Armed Forces.

169        2. For military spouses, verification of a military spouse  
170        relationship and that the other spouse is on active duty or a  
171        veteran.

172        3. Verification that the applicant's business meets the  
173        requirements provided in subparagraphs (3) (c)1.-6.

174        4. The date on which the applicant began doing business in

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175 this state.176 5. For applicants seeking the 1-year sales tax exemption  
177 provided under subparagraph (5)(a)2. must include a copy of  
178 their Florida corporate income or franchise tax return in order  
179 to verify the net income reported for the 5th or 7th taxable  
180 year, as applicable.181 (b) Applicants meeting the registration requirements of  
182 paragraph (a) shall receive a veteran-owned or military spouse-  
183 owned business verification letter from the Department of  
184 Veterans' Affairs.185 1. The verification letter may be presented to the  
186 Department of State to claim the fee waiver provided in  
187 subsection (4).188 2. The verification letter must be attached to the Florida  
189 corporate income or franchise tax return to claim the increased  
190 temporary exemption provided by subparagraph (5)(a)1.191 3. The verification letter may be presented to the  
192 Department of Revenue to receive a temporary tax exemption  
193 certificate pursuant to subparagraph (5)(a)2.194 (c) The Department of Veterans' Affairs shall notify the  
195 Department of Revenue and the Department of State upon  
196 successful verification of the veteran-owned or military spouse-  
197 owned business.198 (8) ANNUAL REPORTING.—Beginning December 31, 2026, and each  
199 December 31 thereafter, the Department of Veterans' Affairs  
200 shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the  
201 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives which  
202 includes:203 (a) The number of veteran-owned and military spouse-owned

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204        businesses that were established in this state.

205        (b) Economic metrics, such as job creation and tax revenue  
206        impact from veteran-owned and military spouse-owned businesses.

207        (c) Demographic data for the participating veterans and  
208        military spouses.

209        Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.