

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to military affairs; amending s.  
3       115.01, F.S.; revising the authorization to be granted  
4       a leave of absence for military service to include the  
5       Coast Guard; removing the condition that such service  
6       be during war between the United States and a foreign  
7       government; amending s. 115.07, F.S.; clarifying a  
8       provision relating to leaves of absence for all  
9       officers and employees of the state and the counties,  
10      municipalities, and political subdivisions of the  
11      state for reserve or guard training; amending s.  
12      115.08, F.S.; revising the definition of the term  
13      "active military service"; amending s. 115.09, F.S.;  
14      specifying that an authorization for a leave of  
15      absence for public officials to perform active  
16      military service for a specified timeframe is based on  
17      a single order; amending s. 115.14, F.S.; specifying  
18      that an authorization for a leave of absence for all  
19      employees of the state and the counties,  
20      municipalities, and political subdivisions of the  
21      state to perform active military service for a  
22      specified timeframe is based on a single order;  
23      amending s. 250.10, F.S.; removing a requirement that  
24      the Adjutant General administer youth About Face  
25      Programs and adult Forward March programs; removing

provisions governing the programs; amending s.  
250.116, F.S.; revising eligibility for the Soldiers  
and Airmen Assistance Program to include traditional  
drilling guardsmen on state active duty or on Title 32  
United States Code duty and their eligible  
beneficiaries demonstrating valid financial need;  
defining the term "beneficiary"; requiring requests  
for assistance to be reviewed, processed, and approved  
by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of  
directors; requiring requests for assistance to be  
reviewed and evaluated based on specified criteria;  
requiring an annual external audit of the program;  
requiring the board to annually review the bylaws that  
govern the program; requiring the board to provide a  
report to the Department of Military Affairs to be  
approved by the Adjutant General; reenacting s.  
115.06, F.S., relating to reassumption of duties for  
officers returning from the service of the United  
States, to incorporate the amendment made to s.  
115.01, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an  
effective date.

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

**Section 1.   Section 115.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to**

51 **read:**

52 115.01 Leave of absence for military service.—Any county  
53 or state official of the state, subject to the provisions and  
54 conditions hereinafter set forth, may be granted leave of  
55 absence from his or her office, to serve in the volunteer forces  
56 of the United States, or in the National Guard of any state, or  
57 in the regular Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard,  
58 or Space Force of the United States, when the same shall be  
59 called into active service of the United States ~~during war~~  
60 ~~between the United States and a foreign government.~~

61 **Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 115.07, Florida**  
62 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

63 115.07 Officers and employees' leaves of absence for  
64 reserve or guard training.—

65 (1) All officers or employees of the state, of the several  
66 counties of the state, and of the municipalities or political  
67 subdivisions of the state who are commissioned reserve officers  
68 or reserve enlisted personnel in the United States military or  
69 naval service or members of the National Guard are entitled to  
70 leaves of absence from their respective duties, without loss of  
71 vacation leave, pay, time, or efficiency rating, on all days  
72 during which they are engaged in training ordered under the  
73 provisions of the United States military or naval training  
74 regulations or applicable general law for such personnel when  
75 assigned to active or inactive duty.

76       **Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 115.08, Florida**  
77 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

78       115.08 Definitions.—

79       (1) The term "active military service" as used in this  
80 chapter means ~~shall signify~~ active duty ~~in the Florida defense~~  
81 ~~force or federal service in training or on active duty~~ with any  
82 branch of the Armed Forces or Reservists of the Armed Forces,  
83 the Florida National Guard, the Coast Guard of the United  
84 States, and service of all officers of the United States Public  
85 Health Service detailed by proper authority for duty with the  
86 Armed Forces, and includes ~~shall include~~ the period during which  
87 a person in military service is absent from duty on account of  
88 sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause.

89       **Section 4. Section 115.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to**  
90 **read:**

91       115.09 Leave to public officials for military service.—All  
92 officials of the state, the several counties of the state, and  
93 the municipalities or political subdivisions of the state,  
94 including district school and Florida ~~community~~ College System  
95 officers, which officials are also servicemembers in the  
96 National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the  
97 United States, must be granted leave of absence from their  
98 respective offices and duties to perform active military  
99 service, with the first 30 days of any such leave of absence to  
100 be with full pay for active federal military service that is

equal to or greater than 90 consecutive days on a single order.

**Section 5. Section 115.14, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

115.14 Employees.—All employees of the state, the several counties of the state, and the municipalities or political subdivisions of the state must be granted leave of absence under the terms of this law; upon such leave of absence being granted, such employee must enjoy the same rights and privileges as are granted to officials under this law, including, without limitation, receiving full pay for the first 30 days for federal military service that is equal to or greater than 90 consecutive days on a single order. Notwithstanding s. 115.09, the employing authority may supplement the military pay of its officials and employees who are reservists called to active military service after the first 30 days in an amount necessary to bring their total salary, inclusive of their base military pay, to the level earned at the time they were called to active military duty. The employing authority shall continue to provide all health insurance and other existing benefits to such officials and employees as required by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.

**Section 6. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section 250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—

(2) The Adjutant General shall:

~~(m) Subject to annual appropriations, administer youth About Face programs and adult Forward March programs at sites to be selected by the Adjutant General. Both programs must provide schoolwork assistance, focusing on the skills needed to master basic high school competencies and functional life skills, including teaching students to work effectively in groups, providing basic instruction in computer skills; teaching basic problem-solving, decisionmaking, and reasoning skills; teaching how the business world and free enterprise work through computer simulations; and teaching home finance and budgeting and other daily living skills.~~

~~1. About Face is a summer and year-round after-school life-preparation program for economically disadvantaged and at-risk youths from 13 through 17 years of age. The program must provide training in academic study skills, and the basic skills that businesses require for employment consideration.~~

~~2. Forward March is a job-readiness program for economically disadvantaged participants who are directed to Forward March by the local workforce development boards. The Forward March program shall provide training on topics that directly relate to the skills required for real-world success. The program shall emphasize functional life skills, computer literacy, interpersonal relationships, critical-thinking skills, business skills, preemployment and work maturity skills, job-search skills, exploring careers activities, how to be a~~

~~successful and effective employee, and some job-specific skills. The program also shall provide extensive opportunities for participants to practice generic job skills in a supervised work setting. Upon completion of the program, Forward March shall return participants to the local workforce development boards for placement in a job placement pool.~~

**Section 7. Subsections (4), (5), and (6) of section 250.116, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (7) is added to that section, to read:**

250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

(4) ELIGIBILITY.—Persons eligible for assistance from the program include:

(a) Servicemembers who are members of the Florida National Guard who are:

~~1. traditional drilling guardsmen on state active duty or on Title 32 United States Code duty, who otherwise do not qualify for the assistance programs available to servicemembers serving under Title 10 United States Code, and who demonstrate valid financial need, and their eligible beneficiaries, are authorized to apply for and receive financial assistance from the program, as administered by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of directors and its governing bylaws, contingent upon the availability of funds serving in the Global War on Terrorism or Overseas Contingency Operation or who request assistance within 120 days after the termination of~~

~~orders for such service and return to their home of record.~~

~~2. Deployed by the Federal Government and participating in state operations for homeland defense or request assistance within 120 days after the termination of orders for such service and return to their home of record.~~

~~(b)1. As used in this subsection, the term "beneficiary" means the current spouse, dependent children, or other designated beneficiaries as determined by the Adjutant General Beneficiaries of an eligible servicemember designated on United States Department of Defense Form 93.~~

~~2. Individuals demonstrating a financial need for authorized assistance who are dependents or family members of an eligible servicemember.~~

(5) REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE; REVIEW; AWARDS.—

(a) A request for assistance must ~~shall~~ be reviewed, and processed, and approved by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of directors ~~at the local level by an official designated by the Adjutant General. During the initial review and processing of the request, the Department of Military Affairs may accept assistance from the direct support organization. Final review and approval of requests for assistance shall be made by the Department of Military Affairs.~~

(b) Requests for assistance must ~~shall~~ be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The impact of a servicemember's financial situation

201 ~~absence~~ and inability to provide quality of life and other  
202 qualifying life-impacting ~~assist in home and vehicle repairs or~~  
203 ~~meet other~~ family needs;

204 ~~2. The economic impact of deployment;~~

205 ~~3. The overall financial situation of the applicant;~~

206 2.4. The assistance authorized under the program; and

207 3.5. Any other consideration dictated in the bylaws of the  
208 Florida National Guard Foundation ~~Other relevant information.~~

209 (6) ~~QUARTERLY~~ FINANCIAL REVIEW.—The financial committee of  
210 the board of directors of the direct-support organization shall  
211 review financial transactions of the program each quarter. The  
212 board of directors must also ensure an annual external audit is  
213 completed and published on the publicly available website of the  
214 direct-support organization. This audit must ~~review shall~~ be  
215 provided to the Department of Military Affairs in order to  
216 determine whether the direct-support organization is being  
217 operated in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the  
218 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Fund, and in the best interests  
219 of the department. The financial committee may request the  
220 Office of Inspector General to conduct additional reviews.

221 (7) ANNUAL BYLAW REVIEW.—The Florida National Guard  
222 Foundation's board of directors shall annually review the bylaws  
223 that govern the program. This review shall be provided in a  
224 report to the Department of Military Affairs and subject to  
225 approval by the Adjutant General.

226        **Section 8.** For the purpose of incorporating the amendment  
227 made by this act to section 115.01, Florida Statutes, in a  
228 reference thereto, section 115.06, Florida Statutes, is  
229 reenacted to read:

230        115.06 Reassumption of duties.—Upon being mustered out of  
231 the service of the United States, such officer granted leave  
232 under s. 115.01 shall immediately enter into the duties of his  
233 or her office for the remainder of the term for which he or she  
234 was elected.

235        **Section 9.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.