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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to military affairs; amending s. 115.01, F.S.; revising the authorization to be granted a leave of absence for military service to include the Coast Guard; removing the condition that such service be during war between the United States and a foreign government; amending s. 115.07, F.S.; clarifying a provision relating to leaves of absence for all officers and employees of the state and the counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions of the state for reserve or guard training; amending s. 115.08, F.S.; revising the definition of the term "active military service"; amending s. 115.09, F.S.; specifying that an authorization for a leave of absence for public officials to perform active military service for a specified timeframe is based on a single order; amending s. 115.14, F.S.; specifying that an authorization for a leave of absence for all employees of the state and the counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions of the state to perform active military service for a specified timeframe is based on a single order; amending s. 250.10, F.S.; removing a requirement that the Adjutant General administer youth About Face Programs and adult Forward March programs; removing

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26 provisions governing the programs; amending s.
27 250.116, F.S.; revising eligibility for the Soldiers
28 and Airmen Assistance Program to include traditional
29 drilling guardsmen on state active duty or on Title 32
30 United States Code duty and their eligible
31 beneficiaries demonstrating valid financial need;
32 defining the term "beneficiary"; requiring requests
33 for assistance to be reviewed, processed, and approved
34 by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of
35 directors; requiring requests for assistance to be
36 reviewed and evaluated based on specified criteria;
37 requiring an annual external audit of the program;
38 requiring the board to annually review the bylaws that
39 govern the program; requiring the board to provide a
40 report to the Department of Military Affairs to be
41 approved by the Adjutant General; reenacting s.
42 115.06, F.S., relating to reassumption of duties for
43 officers returning from the service of the United
44 States, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
45 115.01, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an
46 effective date.

47
48 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

49
50 **Section 1. Section 115.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to**

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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

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

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

104 115.14 Employees.—All employees of the state, the several
105 counties of the state, and the municipalities or political
106 subdivisions of the state must be granted leave of absence under
107 the terms of this law; upon such leave of absence being granted,
108 such employee must enjoy the same rights and privileges as are
109 granted to officials under this law, including, without
110 limitation, receiving full pay for the first 30 days for federal
111 military service that is equal to or greater than 90 consecutive
112 days on a single order. Notwithstanding s. 115.09, the employing
113 authority may supplement the military pay of its officials and
114 employees who are reservists called to active military service
115 after the first 30 days in an amount necessary to bring their
116 total salary, inclusive of their base military pay, to the level
117 earned at the time they were called to active military duty. The
118 employing authority shall continue to provide all health
119 insurance and other existing benefits to such officials and
120 employees as required by the Uniformed Services Employment and
121 Reemployment Rights Act, chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.

122 **Section 6. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section**
123 **250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

124 250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—
125 (2) The Adjutant General shall:

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

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

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

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

157 **Section 7. Subsections (4), (5), and (6) of section**
158 **250.116, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (7) is**
159 **added to that section, to read:**

160 250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

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

163 (a) Servicemembers who are members of the Florida National
164 Guard who are+

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

200 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.

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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.