

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; authorizing local
12 governments to provide additional paid leave for
13 officers and employees for reserve or guard training;
14 amending s. 115.08, F.S.; revising the definition of
15 the term "active military service"; amending s.
16 115.09, F.S.; specifying that an authorization for a
17 leave of absence for public officials to perform
18 active military service for a specified timeframe is
19 based on a single order; amending s. 115.14, F.S.;
20 specifying that an authorization for a leave of
21 absence for all employees of the state and the
22 counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions
23 of the state to perform active military service for a
24 specified timeframe is based on a single order;
25 amending s. 121.055, F.S.; revising military positions

26 required to participate in the Senior Management
27 Service Class of the Florida Retirement System;
28 amending s. 250.10, F.S.; removing a requirement that
29 the Adjutant General administer youth About Face
30 Programs and adult Forward March programs; removing
31 provisions governing the programs; amending s.
32 250.116, F.S.; revising eligibility for the Soldiers
33 and Airmen Assistance Program to include traditional
34 drilling guardsmen on state active duty or on Title 32
35 United States Code duty and their eligible
36 beneficiaries demonstrating valid financial need;
37 defining the term "beneficiary"; requiring requests
38 for assistance to be reviewed, processed, and approved
39 by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of
40 directors; requiring requests for assistance to be
41 reviewed and evaluated based on specified criteria;
42 requiring an annual external audit of the program;
43 requiring the board to annually review the bylaws that
44 govern the program; requiring the board to provide a
45 report to the Department of Military Affairs to be
46 approved by the Adjutant General; reenacting s.
47 115.06, F.S., relating to reassumption of duties for
48 officers returning from the service of the United
49 States, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
50 115.01, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an

51 effective date.

52
53 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

54
55 **Section 1. Section 115.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to**
56 **read:**

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

66 **Section 2. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 115.07,**
67 **Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (4) and (5),**
68 **respectively, subsections (1) and (2) are amended, and a new**
69 **subsection (3) is added to that section, to read:**

70 115.07 Officers and employees' leaves of absence for
71 reserve or guard training.—

72 (1) All officers or employees of the state, of the several
73 counties of the state, and of the municipalities or political
74 subdivisions of the state who are commissioned reserve officers
75 or reserve enlisted personnel in the United States military or

76 | naval service or members of the National Guard are entitled to
77 | leaves of absence from their respective duties, without loss of
78 | vacation leave, pay, time, or efficiency rating, on all days
79 | during which they are engaged in training ordered under the
80 | provisions of the United States military or naval training
81 | regulations or applicable general law for such personnel when
82 | assigned to active or inactive duty.

83 | (2) Leaves of absence granted as a matter of legal right
84 | under the provisions of this section may not exceed 240 working
85 | hours in any one annual period, except as provided in subsection
86 | (3). Administrative leaves of absence for additional or longer
87 | periods of time for assignment to duty functions of a military
88 | character shall be without pay, except as provided in subsection
89 | (3), and shall be granted by the employing or appointing
90 | authority of any state, county, municipal, or political
91 | subdivision employee and when so granted shall be without loss
92 | of time or efficiency rating.

93 | (3) A county, municipality, or other political subdivision
94 | of the state may adopt an ordinance or resolution providing that
95 | an employee who is a commissioned reserve officer or reserve
96 | enlisted personnel in the United States military or naval
97 | service or who is a member of the National Guard may receive
98 | more than 240 working hours of paid leave from his or her
99 | respective duties, without loss of vacation leave, pay, time, or
100 | efficiency rating, on all days during which he or she is engaged

101 in training ordered under the provisions of the United States
 102 military or naval training regulations or applicable general law
 103 for such personnel when assigned to active or inactive duty,
 104 provided that no state funds are used for such supplemental
 105 payments.

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

108 115.08 Definitions.—

109 (1) The term "active military service" as used in this
 110 chapter means ~~shall signify~~ active duty ~~in the Florida defense~~
 111 ~~force or federal service in training or on active duty~~ with any
 112 branch of the Armed Forces or Reservists of the Armed Forces,
 113 the Florida National Guard, the Coast Guard of the United
 114 States, and service of all officers of the United States Public
 115 Health Service detailed by proper authority for duty with the
 116 Armed Forces, and includes ~~shall include~~ the period during which
 117 a person in military service is absent from duty on account of
 118 sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause.

119 **Section 4. Section 115.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to**
 120 **read:**

121 115.09 Leave to public officials for military service.—All
 122 officials of the state, the several counties of the state, and
 123 the municipalities or political subdivisions of the state,
 124 including district school and Florida ~~community~~ College System
 125 officers, which officials are also servicemembers in the

126 National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the
127 United States, must be granted leave of absence from their
128 respective offices and duties to perform active military
129 service, with the first 30 days of any such leave of absence to
130 be with full pay for active federal military service that is
131 equal to or greater than 90 consecutive days on a single order.

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

134 115.14 Employees.—All employees of the state, the several
135 counties of the state, and the municipalities or political
136 subdivisions of the state must be granted leave of absence under
137 the terms of this law; upon such leave of absence being granted,
138 such employee must enjoy the same rights and privileges as are
139 granted to officials under this law, including, without
140 limitation, receiving full pay for the first 30 days for federal
141 military service that is equal to or greater than 90 consecutive
142 days on a single order. Notwithstanding s. 115.09, the employing
143 authority may supplement the military pay of its officials and
144 employees who are reservists called to active military service
145 after the first 30 days in an amount necessary to bring their
146 total salary, inclusive of their base military pay, to the level
147 earned at the time they were called to active military duty. The
148 employing authority shall continue to provide all health
149 insurance and other existing benefits to such officials and
150 employees as required by the Uniformed Services Employment and

151 Reemployment Rights Act, chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.

152 **Section 6. Paragraph (g) of subsection (1) of section**
153 **121.055, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

154 121.055 Senior Management Service Class.—There is hereby
155 established a separate class of membership within the Florida
156 Retirement System to be known as the "Senior Management Service
157 Class," which shall become effective February 1, 1987.

158 (1)

159 (g) Effective July 1, 1996, participation in the Senior
160 Management Service Class shall be compulsory for any member of
161 the Florida Retirement System employed with the Department of
162 Military Affairs in the uniformed positions of the Adjutant
163 General, Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Assistant Adjutant
164 General-Air, State Quartermaster, ~~Director of Human Resources,~~
165 ~~Director of Legislative Affairs, Inspector General, Executive~~
166 ~~Officer,~~ and additional directors as designated by the agency
167 head, not to exceed two Special Projects Officers of the Florida
168 National Guard ~~a total of 10 positions~~. In lieu of participation
169 in the Senior Management Service Class, such members may
170 participate in the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity
171 Program as established in subsection (6).

172 **Section 7. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section**
173 **250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

174 250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—

175 (2) The Adjutant General shall:

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

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

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

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

207 **Section 8. Subsections (4), (5), and (6) of section**
208 **250.116, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (7) is**
209 **added to that section, to read:**

210 250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

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

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

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

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

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

231 ~~(b)1. As used in this subsection, the term "beneficiary"~~
232 ~~means the current spouse, dependent children, or other~~
233 ~~designated beneficiaries as designated in the servicemember's~~
234 ~~service component records Beneficiaries of an eligible~~
235 ~~servicemember designated on United States Department of Defense~~
236 ~~Form 93.~~

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

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

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

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

251 1. The impact of a servicemember's financial situation
 252 ~~absence~~ and inability to provide quality of life and other
 253 qualifying life-impacting ~~assist in home and vehicle repairs or~~
 254 ~~meet other~~ family needs;

255 ~~2. The economic impact of deployment;~~
 256 ~~3. The overall financial situation of the applicant;~~
 257 2.4. The assistance authorized under the program; and
 258 ~~3.5.~~ Any other consideration dictated in the bylaws of the
 259 Florida National Guard Foundation ~~Other relevant information.~~

260 (6) ~~QUARTERLY~~ FINANCIAL REVIEW.—The financial committee of
 261 the board of directors of the direct-support organization shall
 262 review financial transactions of the program each quarter. The
 263 board of directors must also ensure an annual external audit is
 264 completed and published on the publicly available website of the
 265 direct-support organization. This audit must ~~review shall~~ be
 266 provided to the Department of Military Affairs in order to
 267 determine whether the direct-support organization is being
 268 operated in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the
 269 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Fund, and in the best interests
 270 of the department. The financial committee may request the
 271 Office of Inspector General to conduct additional reviews.

272 (7) ANNUAL BYLAW REVIEW.—The Florida National Guard
 273 Foundation's board of directors shall annually review the bylaws
 274 that govern the program. This review shall be provided in a
 275 report to the Department of Military Affairs and subject to

276 approval by the Adjutant General.

277 **Section 9. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
278 **made by this act to section 115.01, Florida Statutes, in a**
279 **reference thereto, section 115.06, Florida Statutes, is**
280 **reenacted to read:**

281 115.06 Reassumption of duties.—Upon being mustered out of
282 the service of the United States, such officer granted leave
283 under s. 115.01 shall immediately enter into the duties of his
284 or her office for the remainder of the term for which he or she
285 was elected.

286 **Section 10.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.