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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/04/2026	.	
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The Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development (Calatayud) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Section 1004.0983, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

1004.0983 Cybersecurity Experiential Learning Program.—

(1)(a) The Legislature finds that this state's
cybersecurity workforce is essential to state and national
security, multi-sector state economic resilience, and the



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protection of critical infrastructure. The Legislature also finds that this state has a persistent shortfall in its supply of qualified cybersecurity professionals relative to the workforce demand, and that the growing integration of digital technologies in all economic sectors will exacerbate this workforce gap in the future.

(b) The Legislature further finds that there are examples of successful cybersecurity experiential learning opportunities across the state university system, including an experiential cyber program at the University of South Florida, and a combined security clearance readiness and cyber certification program at the University of West Florida. Both institutions are designated as National Security Agency National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (NCAE-C).

(c) The Legislature further finds that expansion of experiential learning opportunities in cybersecurity for students at state universities and Florida College System institutions is likely to accelerate the development of a highly qualified cybersecurity workforce. This expanded capacity to develop a more qualified cybersecurity workforce is necessary to close existing gaps and keep pace with the growth in demand for cybersecurity talent within this state.

(2)(a) Subject to legislative appropriation, the Department of Commerce shall create and operate the Cybersecurity Experiential Learning Program in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

(b) The Department of Commerce must use 10 percent of the appropriated funds in the 2026-2027 fiscal year to enter into an agreement with Cyber Florida within the University of South Florida to collaborate in designing the program for



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implementation at a minimum of one state university or Florida College System institution during the 2026-2027 school year, and to plan for the expansion of the program to additional sites and additional national security-focused workforces in future years.

(3) Cyber Florida shall determine and report back to the department on the following:

(a) The specific internship opportunities and experiential learning opportunities that the United States Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) believes will be the most impactful on a student's job placement in high-demand cybersecurity roles in the state, including an assessment of when completing a federal security clearance readiness program will assist certain students in job placement in this state.

(b) A review of best practices for cybersecurity experiential learning opportunities in place at other NCAE-C-designated institutions within and outside of this state which can be replicated at institutions across this state.

(c) A recommendation for the minimum qualifications a student should possess or meet prior to enrolling in an experiential learning program.

(d) A listing of the state universities and Florida College System institutions that wish to participate in the program, along with an expected number of students to be served by the program at each participating institution during the fiscal year. Cyber Florida shall make a recommendation to the department for the disbursement of available funds for the program to maximize statewide impact, improve students' job placement, and support economic growth in this state's defense



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industry.

(e) A listing of employers in this state with openings or anticipated openings in cybersecurity roles or other industries that perform work that requires a security clearance.

(4) (a) In each fiscal year in which funds are appropriated to the program, or where an unspent balance for the program remains from a prior year's appropriation which can continue to support the program's operations, the Department of Commerce may:

1. Implement the program and directly disburse the funds to participating institutions. Such funds may be used to cover the cost of students going through the security clearance process;
or

2. Enter into a mutually agreed upon multi-year contract with Cyber Florida to administer the program statewide and disburse the available funding to participating institutions.

(b) Any disbursement of funds under this subsection is subject to approval by the department.

(5) Beginning January 15, 2028, and on each January 15 following the completion of a fiscal year in which the program operates, the Department of Commerce shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives which includes all the following:

(a) The number of students participating in experiential learning opportunities at each participating institution and a listing of the specific outcomes, skills, or credentials, including security clearances, earned by students through the program which contributed to job placement.

(b) The number of students who completed an experiential



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learning opportunity through the program who subsequently
reported entering federal, state, or private sector
cybersecurity positions in the state, and the number of students
provided security clearance preparation training for other
fields.

(c) Recommendations for program improvements, including
potential integration with other state workforce initiatives and
potentially expanding the program to workforces supporting
national security such as defense manufacturing and aerospace
related engineering fields.

(6) This section expires on July 1, 2032.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete everything before the enacting clause
and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to cybersecurity internships; creating
s. 1004.0983, F.S.; providing legislative findings;
requiring the Department of Commerce to create the
Cybersecurity Experiential Learning Program in a
specified fiscal year, subject to legislative
appropriation; requiring the department use a certain
percentage of appropriated funds in a specified fiscal
year to enter into an agreement with Cyber Florida at
the University of South Florida to collaborate in
designing the program for implementation and plan for
expansion of the program; requiring Cyber Florida to



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127 report specified information to the department;
128 providing the department with authorized uses of
129 unspent funds; requiring that disbursement of funds is
130 subject to department approval; requiring the
131 department to submit an annual report by a specified
132 date to the Governor and the Legislature; providing
133 requirements for the report; providing for the
134 expiration of the program; providing an effective
135 date.