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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; deleting the condition that such service
6 be during war between the United States and a foreign
7 government; amending s. 115.07, F.S.; revising the
8 authorization to be granted a leave of absence for
9 reserve or guard training to include members of the
10 Florida State Guard; revising legislative intent;
11 amending s. 115.08, F.S.; revising the definition of
12 the term "active military service"; amending s.
13 115.09, F.S.; specifying that an authorization for a
14 leave of absence for public officials to perform
15 active military service for a specified timeframe is
16 based on a single order; making a technical change;
17 amending s. 115.14, F.S.; clarifying the applicable
18 employing agencies subject to military leave
19 requirements; specifying that an authorization for a
20 leave of absence for all employees of the state and
21 the counties, municipalities, and political
22 subdivisions of the state to perform active military
23 service for a specified timeframe is based on a single
24 order; amending s. 121.055, F.S.; revising the list of
25 military positions required to participate in the
26 Senior Management Service Class of the Florida
27 Retirement System; amending s. 250.10, F.S.; deleting
28 a requirement that the Adjutant General administer
29 youth About Face programs and adult Forward March

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

51
52 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

53
54 Section 1. Section 115.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to
55 read:

56 115.01 Leave of absence for military service.—Any county or
57 state official of the state, subject to the provisions and
58 conditions hereinafter set forth, may be granted leave of

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59 absence from his or her office, to serve in the volunteer forces
60 of the United States, or in the National Guard of any state, or
61 in the regular Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard,
62 or Space Force of the United States, when the same shall be
63 called into active service of the United States ~~during war~~
64 ~~between the United States and a foreign government.~~

65 Section 2. Subsections (1) and (4) of section 115.07,
66 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

67 115.07 Officers and employees' leaves of absence for
68 reserve or guard training.-

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

81 (4) It is the intent of the Legislature that the state, its
82 several counties, and its municipalities and political
83 subdivisions shall grant leaves of absence for active or
84 inactive training to all employees who are members of the United
85 States Reserve Forces, ~~or~~ the National Guard, or the Florida
86 State Guard, to ensure the state and national security at all
87 times through a strong armed force of qualified and

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88 mobilization-ready personnel.

89 Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 115.08, Florida
90 Statutes, is amended to read:

91 115.08 Definitions.—

92 (1) The term "active military service" as used in this
93 chapter means ~~shall signify~~ active duty in the Florida State
94 Guard ~~defense force~~ or federal service in training or on active
95 duty with any branch of the Armed Forces or Reservists of the
96 Armed Forces, the Florida National Guard, the Coast Guard of the
97 United States, and service of all officers of the United States
98 Public Health Service detailed by proper authority for duty with
99 the Armed Forces, and includes ~~shall include~~ the period during
100 which a person in military service is absent from duty on
101 account of sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause.

102 Section 4. Section 115.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to
103 read:

104 115.09 Leave to public officials for military service.—All
105 officials of the state, the several counties of the state, and
106 the municipalities or political subdivisions of the state,
107 including district school and Florida ~~community~~ College System
108 officers, which officials are also servicemembers in the
109 National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the
110 United States, must be granted leave of absence from their
111 respective offices and duties to perform active military
112 service, with the first 30 days of any such leave of absence to
113 be with full pay for active federal military service that is
114 equal to or greater than 90 consecutive days on a single order.

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

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117 115.14 Employees.—All employees of the state, the several
118 counties of the state, and the municipalities or political
119 subdivisions of the state, including district school and Florida
120 College System employees, must be granted leave of absence under
121 the terms of this law; upon such leave of absence being granted,
122 such employee must enjoy the same rights and privileges as are
123 granted to officials under this law, including, without
124 limitation, receiving full pay for the first 30 days for federal
125 military service that is equal to or greater than 90 consecutive
126 days on a single order. Notwithstanding s. 115.09, the employing
127 authority may supplement the military pay of its officials and
128 employees who are reservists called to active military service
129 after the first 30 days in an amount necessary to bring their
130 total salary, inclusive of their base military pay, to the level
131 earned at the time they were called to active military duty. The
132 employing authority shall continue to provide all health
133 insurance and other existing benefits to such officials and
134 employees as required by the Uniformed Services Employment and
135 Reemployment Rights Act, chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.

136 Section 6. Paragraph (g) of subsection (1) of section
137 121.055, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

138 121.055 Senior Management Service Class.—There is hereby
139 established a separate class of membership within the Florida
140 Retirement System to be known as the "Senior Management Service
141 Class," which shall become effective February 1, 1987.

142 (1)

143 (g) Effective July 1, 1996, participation in the Senior
144 Management Service Class shall be compulsory for any member of
145 the Florida Retirement System employed with the Department of

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146 Military Affairs in the uniformed positions of the Adjutant
147 General, Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Assistant Adjutant
148 General-Air, and State Quartermaster, ~~Director of Human~~
149 ~~Resources, Director of Legislative Affairs, Inspector General,~~
150 ~~Executive Officer~~, and two positions of Special Projects Officer
151 of the Florida National Guard ~~additional directors~~ as designated
152 by the agency head, ~~not to exceed a total of 10 positions~~. In
153 lieu of participation in the Senior Management Service Class,
154 such members may participate in the Senior Management Service
155 Optional Annuity Program as established in subsection (6).

156 Section 7. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section
157 250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

158 250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—

159 (2) The Adjutant General shall:

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

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

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175 ~~businesses require for employment consideration.~~

176 ~~2. Forward March is a job-readiness program for~~
177 ~~economically disadvantaged participants who are directed to~~
178 ~~Forward March by the local workforce development boards. The~~
179 ~~Forward March program shall provide training on topics that~~
180 ~~directly relate to the skills required for real-world success.~~
181 ~~The program shall emphasize functional life skills, computer~~
182 ~~literacy, interpersonal relationships, critical-thinking skills,~~
183 ~~business skills, preemployment and work maturity skills, job-~~
184 ~~search skills, exploring careers activities, how to be a~~
185 ~~successful and effective employee, and some job-specific skills.~~
186 ~~The program also shall provide extensive opportunities for~~
187 ~~participants to practice generic job skills in a supervised work~~
188 ~~setting. Upon completion of the program, Forward March shall~~
189 ~~return participants to the local workforce development boards~~
190 ~~for placement in a job placement pool.~~

191 Section 8. Subsections (4), (5), and (6) of section
192 250.116, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (7) is
193 added to that section, to read:

194 250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

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

197 (a) Persons eligible for assistance from the program
198 include servicemembers who are members of the Florida National
199 Guard who are:

200 1. traditional drilling guardsmen on state active duty or
201 on Title 32 United States Code duty, who otherwise do not
202 qualify for the assistance programs available to servicemembers
203 serving under Title 10 United States Code, and who demonstrate

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204 valid financial need, and their eligible beneficiaries, and such
205 persons are authorized to apply for and receive financial
206 assistance from the program, as administered by the Florida
207 National Guard Foundation's board of directors and its governing
208 bylaws, contingent upon the availability of funds ~~servicing in the~~
209 ~~Global War on Terrorism or Overseas Contingency Operation or who~~
210 ~~request assistance within 120 days after the termination of~~
211 ~~orders for such service and return to their home of record.~~

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

216 ~~(b)1. As used in this subsection, the term "beneficiary"~~
217 ~~means the current spouse, dependent children, or other~~
218 ~~beneficiaries as designated in the servicemember's service~~
219 ~~component records~~ Beneficiaries of an eligible servicemember
220 ~~designated on United States Department of Defense Form 93.~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

241 4. The assistance authorized under the program; and

242 3.5. Any other consideration dictated in the bylaws of the
243 Florida National Guard Foundation ~~Other relevant information.~~

244 (6) ANNUAL ~~QUARTERLY~~ FINANCIAL REVIEW.—The financial
245 committee of the board of directors of the direct-support
246 organization shall review financial transactions of the program
247 each quarter. The board of directors also must ensure an annual
248 external audit is completed and published on the publicly
249 available website of the direct-support organization. This audit
250 must ~~review shall~~ be provided to the Department of Military
251 Affairs in order to determine whether the direct-support
252 organization is being operated in a manner that is consistent
253 with the purposes of the Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Fund,
254 and in the best interests of the department. The financial
255 committee may request the Office of Inspector General to conduct
256 additional reviews.

257 (7) ANNUAL BYLAW REVIEW.—The board of directors of the
258 direct-support organization shall annually review its bylaws
259 that govern the Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program. This
260 review shall be provided in a report to the Department of
261 Military Affairs and subject to approval by the Adjutant

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262 General.

263 Section 9. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
264 made by this act to section 115.01, Florida Statutes, in a
265 reference thereto, section 115.06, Florida Statutes, is
266 reenacted to read:

267 115.06 Reassumption of duties.—Upon being mustered out of
268 the service of the United States, such officer granted leave
269 under s. 115.01 shall immediately enter into the duties of his
270 or her office for the remainder of the term for which he or she
271 was elected.

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