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1  
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 the list of  
26 military positions required to participate in the  
27 Senior Management Service Class of the Florida  
28 Retirement System; amending s. 250.10, F.S.; removing  
29 a requirement that the Adjutant General administer

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30 youth About Face Programs and adult Forward March  
31 programs; removing provisions governing the programs;  
32 amending s. 250.116, F.S.; revising eligibility for  
33 the Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program to include  
34 traditional drilling guardsmen on state active duty or  
35 on Title 32 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 or  
58 state official of the state, subject to the provisions and

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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

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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

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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

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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, and State Quartermaster, ~~Director of Human~~  
165 ~~Resources, Director of Legislative Affairs, Inspector General,~~  
166 ~~Executive Officer,~~ and two positions serving as a Special  
167 Projects Officer of the Florida National Guard ~~additional~~  
168 ~~directors~~ as designated by the agency head, ~~not to exceed a~~  
169 ~~total of 10 positions~~. In lieu of participation in the Senior  
170 Management Service Class, such members may participate in the  
171 Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program as  
172 established in subsection (6).

173 Section 7. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section  
174 250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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175 250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—

176 (2) The Adjutant General shall:

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

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

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

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204 ~~participants to practice generic job skills in a supervised work~~  
205 ~~setting. Upon completion of the program, Forward March shall~~  
206 ~~return participants to the local workforce development boards~~  
207 ~~for placement in a job placement pool.~~

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

211 250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

212 (4) ELIGIBILITY. ~~Persons eligible for assistance from the~~  
213 ~~program include:~~

214 (a) Persons eligible for assistance from the program  
215 include servicemembers who are members of the Florida National  
216 Guard who are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

258           ~~2.4.~~ The assistance authorized under the program; and

259           ~~3.5.~~ Any other consideration dictated in the bylaws of the  
260 Florida National Guard Foundation ~~Other relevant information.~~

261           (6) ~~QUARTERLY~~ FINANCIAL REVIEW.—The financial committee of

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

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

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

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

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