

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to military and veteran support;
3 creating s. 295.156, F.S.; requiring the Department of
4 Veterans' Affairs, subject to appropriation, to
5 contract with individuals and entities to provide
6 alternative treatment options for certain veterans;
7 defining the term "alternative treatment"; requiring
8 alternative treatment to be provided under the
9 direction and supervision of certain licensed
10 individuals; requiring a contracted individual or
11 entity to submit an annual report to the department;
12 amending s. 454.021, F.S.; authorizing the Supreme
13 Court of Florida to admit on motion a bar applicant
14 who is the spouse of a servicemember stationed in this
15 state under certain circumstances; providing for
16 construction; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; requiring the
17 Department of Education to expedite the processing of
18 an application for educator certification submitted by
19 the spouse of a servicemember stationed in this state;
20 requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules
21 regarding extending validity of a temporary
22 certificate if the applicant is the spouse of a
23 servicemember stationed in this state; providing
24 legislative findings and intent regarding continuing
25 education for veterans of the United States Armed

26 Forces; providing legislative intent to require
 27 collaboration between the State Board of Education and
 28 the Board of Governors of the State University System
 29 in achieving specified goals regarding educational
 30 opportunities for veterans; providing an effective
 31 date.

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33 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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35 Section 1. Section 295.156, Florida Statutes, is created
 36 to read:

37 295.156 Alternative treatment options for veterans.-

38 (1) Subject to legislative appropriation, the Department
 39 of Veterans' Affairs shall contract with one or more
 40 individuals, corporations not for profit, state universities, or
 41 Florida College System institutions that have a background in
 42 veterans' health care to provide alternative treatment options
 43 for veterans who have been certified by the United States
 44 Department of Veterans Affairs or any branch of the United
 45 States Armed Forces as having a traumatic brain injury or
 46 posttraumatic stress disorder. For purposes of this section, the
 47 term "alternative treatment" means a therapeutic service that is
 48 not part of the standard of medical care established by the
 49 United States Department of Veterans Affairs for treating
 50 traumatic brain injury or posttraumatic stress disorder but has

51 been shown by at least one scientific or medical peer-reviewed
52 study to have some positive effect on traumatic brain injury or
53 posttraumatic stress disorder. Alternative treatment must be
54 provided under the direction and supervision of an individual
55 licensed under chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, chapter
56 464, chapter 490, or chapter 491.

57 (2) Each contracted individual or entity shall report
58 annually to the department each type of alternative treatment
59 provided, the number of veterans served, and the treatment
60 outcomes.

61 Section 2. Subsection (4) is added to section 454.021,
62 Florida Statutes, to read:

63 454.021 Attorneys; admission to practice law; Supreme
64 Court to govern and regulate.—

65 (4) (a) The Supreme Court of Florida may admit on motion an
66 applicant as an attorney at law authorized to practice law in
67 this state if the applicant is a spouse of a servicemember, as
68 that term is defined in s. 250.01, stationed in this state upon
69 certification by the Florida Board of Bar Examiners that the
70 applicant meets the following requirements:

71 1. Is registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility
72 Reporting System established by the United States Department of
73 Defense;

74 2. Holds a Juris Doctor or Bachelor of Laws from a law
75 school accredited by the American Bar Association;

76 3. Is licensed to practice law in another state, the
 77 District of Columbia, or a territory of the United States after
 78 having passed a written examination;

79 4. Can establish that he or she is a member in good
 80 standing in all jurisdictions in which he or she is licensed to
 81 practice law and that he or she is not currently subject to
 82 discipline or a pending disciplinary matter relating to the
 83 practice of law;

84 5. Can demonstrate his or her presence in this state as a
 85 spouse of a servicemember; and

86 6. Has otherwise fulfilled all requirements for admission
 87 to practice law in this state.

88 (b) The Supreme Court of Florida may specify circumstances
 89 under which the license and authorization to practice law in
 90 this state of an attorney admitted in accordance with paragraph
 91 (a) terminates.

92 (c) In the event of a conflict between this subsection and
 93 any rule regulating The Florida Bar authorizing the spouse of a
 94 servicemember to practice law in this state, the provisions of
 95 the rule shall prevail.

96 Section 3. Subsections (1) and (7) of section 1012.56,
 97 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

98 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

99 (1) APPLICATION.—Each person seeking certification
 100 pursuant to this chapter shall submit a completed application

101 containing the applicant's social security number to the
102 Department of Education and remit the fee required pursuant to
103 s. 1012.59 and rules of the State Board of Education. Pursuant
104 to the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity
105 Reconciliation Act of 1996, each party is required to provide
106 his or her social security number in accordance with this
107 section. Disclosure of social security numbers obtained through
108 this requirement is limited to the purpose of administration of
109 the Title IV-D program of the Social Security Act for child
110 support enforcement.

111 (a) Pursuant to s. 120.60, the department shall issue
112 within 90 calendar days after receipt of the completed
113 application a professional certificate to a qualifying applicant
114 covering the classification, level, and area for which the
115 applicant is deemed qualified and a document explaining the
116 requirements for renewal of the professional certificate. If the
117 applicant is the spouse of a servicemember, as that term is
118 defined in s. 250.01, stationed in this state and if the
119 applicant holds a current professional standard teaching
120 certificate issued by another state, the department shall
121 expedite the processing of the application and issue a
122 certificate to a qualifying applicant within 60 calendar days
123 after receipt of the completed application.

124 (b) The department shall issue a temporary certificate to
125 a qualifying applicant within 14 calendar days after receipt of

126 a request from an employer with a professional education
127 competence demonstration program pursuant to paragraphs (6)(f)
128 and (8)(b). The temporary certificate must cover the
129 classification, level, and area for which the applicant is
130 deemed qualified. The department shall electronically notify the
131 applicant's employer that the temporary certificate has been
132 issued and provide the applicant an official statement of status
133 of eligibility at the time the certificate is issued.

134 (c) Pursuant to s. 120.60, the department shall issue
135 within 90 calendar days after receipt of the completed
136 application, if an applicant does not meet the requirements for
137 either certificate, an official statement of status of
138 eligibility. If the applicant is the spouse of a servicemember,
139 as that term is defined in s. 250.01, stationed in this state,
140 the department shall issue a statement of status of eligibility
141 within 60 calendar days after receipt of the completed
142 application if such applicant does not meet the requirements for
143 either certificate.

144
145 The statement of status of eligibility must be provided
146 electronically and must advise the applicant of any
147 qualifications that must be completed to qualify for
148 certification. Each method by which an applicant can complete
149 the qualifications for a professional certificate must be
150 included in the statement of status of eligibility. Each

151 statement of status of eligibility is valid for 3 years after
152 its date of issuance, except as provided in paragraph (2)(d).

153 (7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

154 (a) The Department of Education shall issue a professional
155 certificate for a period not to exceed 5 years to any applicant
156 who fulfills one of the following:

157 1. Meets all the requirements outlined in subsection (2).

158 2. For a professional certificate covering grades 6
159 through 12:

160 a. Meets the requirements of paragraphs (2)(a)-(h).

161 b. Holds a master's or higher degree in the area of
162 science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

163 c. Teaches a high school course in the subject of the
164 advanced degree.

165 d. Is rated highly effective as determined by the
166 teacher's performance evaluation under s. 1012.34, based in part
167 on student performance as measured by a statewide, standardized
168 assessment or an Advanced Placement, Advanced International
169 Certificate of Education, or International Baccalaureate
170 examination.

171 e. Achieves a passing score on the Florida professional
172 education competency examination required by state board rule.

173 3. Meets the requirements of paragraphs (2)(a)-(h) and
174 completes a professional preparation and education competence
175 program approved by the department pursuant to paragraph (8)(c).

176 An applicant who completes the program and is rated highly
177 effective as determined by his or her performance evaluation
178 under s. 1012.34 is not required to take or achieve a passing
179 score on the professional education competency examination in
180 order to be awarded a professional certificate.

181 (b) The department shall issue a temporary certificate to
182 any applicant who completes the requirements outlined in
183 paragraphs (2) (a)-(f) and completes the subject area content
184 requirements specified in state board rule or demonstrates
185 mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5) and
186 holds an accredited degree or a degree approved by the
187 Department of Education at the level required for the subject
188 area specialization in state board rule.

189 (c) The department shall issue one nonrenewable 2-year
190 temporary certificate and one nonrenewable 5-year professional
191 certificate to a qualified applicant who holds a bachelor's
192 degree in the area of speech-language impairment to allow for
193 completion of a master's degree program in speech-language
194 impairment.

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196 Each temporary certificate is valid for 3 school fiscal years
197 and is nonrenewable. However, the requirement in paragraph
198 (2) (g) must be met within 1 calendar year of the date of
199 employment under the temporary certificate. Individuals who are
200 employed under contract at the end of the 1 calendar year time

201 period may continue to be employed through the end of the school
202 year in which they have been contracted. A school district shall
203 not employ, or continue the employment of, an individual in a
204 position for which a temporary certificate is required beyond
205 this time period if the individual has not met the requirement
206 of paragraph (2)(g). At least 1 year before an individual's
207 temporary certificate is set to expire, the department shall
208 electronically notify the individual of the date on which his or
209 her certificate will expire and provide a list of each method by
210 which the qualifications for a professional certificate can be
211 completed. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
212 allow the department to extend the validity period of a
213 temporary certificate for 2 years when the requirements for the
214 professional certificate, not including the requirement in
215 paragraph (2)(g), were not completed due to the serious illness
216 or injury of the applicant; when the applicant is the spouse of
217 a servicemember stationed in this state; or when there are ~~or~~
218 other extraordinary extenuating circumstances; or for 1 year if
219 the temporary certificateholder is rated effective or highly
220 effective based solely on a student learning growth formula
221 approved by the Commissioner of Education pursuant to s.
222 1012.34(8). The department shall reissue the temporary
223 certificate for 2 additional years upon approval by the
224 Commissioner of Education. A written request for reissuance of
225 the certificate shall be submitted by the district school

226 superintendent, the governing authority of a university lab
227 school, the governing authority of a state-supported school, or
228 the governing authority of a private school.

229 Section 4. Legislative findings and intent; continuing
230 education of veterans of the United States Armed Forces.—The
231 Legislature finds that many veterans of the United States Armed
232 Forces in this state have completed training and coursework
233 during their military service, including overseas deployments,
234 resulting in tangible and quantifiable strides in their pursuit
235 of a postsecondary degree. The Legislature further finds that
236 the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the
237 State University System must work together to ensure that
238 military training and coursework are granted academic credit in
239 order to assist veterans in continuing their educations.
240 Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature that the State
241 Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the State
242 University System work collaboratively to:

243 (1) Align existing degree programs, including, but not
244 limited to, vocational and technical degrees, at each state
245 university and Florida College System institution with
246 applicable military training and experience to maximize academic
247 credit awarded for such training and experience.

248 (2) Appoint and train specific faculty members within each
249 degree program at each state university and Florida College
250 System institution as liaisons and contacts for veterans.

251 (3) Incorporate outreach services tailored to disabled
252 veterans into existing disability services on the campus of each
253 state university and Florida College System institution to make
254 available to such veterans information on disability services
255 provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,
256 other federal and state agencies, and private entities.

257 (4) Facilitate statewide meetings for personnel at state
258 universities and Florida College System institutions who provide
259 student services to veterans to discuss and develop best
260 practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and attend
261 presentations by individuals with expertise in the unique needs
262 of veterans.

263 (5) Make every effort to provide veterans with sufficient
264 courses required for graduation, including, but not limited to,
265 giving priority registration to veterans.

266 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.