

The Florida Senate  
**COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA**  
**MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, SPACE, AND**  
**DOMESTIC SECURITY**  
**Senator Altman, Chair**  
**Senator Gibson, Vice Chair**

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, February 3, 2015  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon  
**PLACE:** Mallory Horne Committee Room, 37 Senate Office Building

**MEMBERS:** Senator Altman, Chair; Senator Gibson, Vice Chair; Senators Evers, Sachs, and Stargel

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	<b>SB 292</b> Garcia	Small Business Financial Assistance; Creating the Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program within the Department of Economic Opportunity; specifying grant amounts; providing that a small business may not receive an additional award for hiring a veteran previously claimed as an employee for purposes of obtaining funds under the program; requiring the department to notify the appropriate regional small business center of a small business' participation, etc.  MS 02/03/2015 Fav/CS ATD AP	Fav/CS Yeas 5 Nays 0
2	Presentation by Dr. Bruce Grant, Executive Director, Florida Defense Support Task Force		Presented
Other Related Meeting Documents			

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

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BILL: CS/SB 292

INTRODUCER: Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senator Garcia

SUBJECT: Small Business Financial Assistance

DATE: February 5, 2015

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Sanders/Ryon</u>	<u>Ryon</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>Fav/CS</u>
2.	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>ATD</u>	<u>                    </u>
3.	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>                    </u>

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/SB 292 creates the Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program to encourage small businesses in Florida to hire veterans. The program is created within the Department of Veterans' Affairs and is to be administered by Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. (FIFV). Under the program, a small business in Florida that hires a veteran as an employee may receive a one-time grant of \$3,000 for each veteran hired, or \$5,000 for each disabled veteran hired by the small business. These awards may not exceed \$25,000 per fiscal year.

To qualify for the grant under the program, a small business must agree to:

- Employ a qualifying veteran for at least 6 months;
- Provide a report with information on the employment status of each qualifying veteran upon the request of the FIFV;
- Pay each qualifying veteran an amount equal to at least 80% of the annual median income for veterans in Florida based on the most recent federal census or the most recent American Community Survey 5-year estimated published by the U.S. Census Bureau;
- Reinvest any awarded grant moneys in the small business to facilitate further job creation; and
- Not receive an additional award for hiring a veteran previously claimed as an employee within the same small business for purposes of obtaining funds under the program.

A small business may be eligible for an additional one-time grant of \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran whose employment continues beyond an initial 12-month period and an additional one-time grant of \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran if the business used the services of a regional workforce board in hiring the veteran.

The bill appropriates \$10 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Veterans’ Affairs for transfer to FIFV to implement and administer the program. FIFV may award grant moneys up to a maximum of \$800,000 per fiscal year.

**II. Present Situation:**

**Florida Veterans**

A veteran is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was honorably discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions.<sup>1</sup> In the United States there are over 21 million living veterans, of which, over 1.5 million reside in Florida.<sup>2</sup> This makes Florida the state with the third largest veteran population, behind California and Texas.<sup>3</sup> The chart below shows veterans residing in Florida by age range. More than half of Florida’s veterans are age 60 or older.

Veterans in Florida by Age Range <sup>4</sup>						
Under 40	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80+	TOTAL
185,238	187,599	280,743	352,029	312,702	264,385	1,583,697

Florida also has the third largest population of disabled veterans in the nation with more than 249,000.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) is the federal agency tasked with making the official determination of the existence of a service-connected disability. The term “disabled veteran” is defined in the U.S. Code as an individual who has served on active duty in the armed forces, has been separated under honorable conditions, and has established the existence of a service-connected disability. Generally, a disabled veteran receives compensation, disability retirement benefits, or a pension pursuant to public statute administered by the USDVA or a military department.<sup>6</sup>

The term “service-connected” is further defined in the U.S. Code to mean that the disability or death suffered by the veteran was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in active military, naval, or air service.<sup>7</sup> Veterans who have been determined by the USDVA to have a service-connected disability are eligible for monthly disability compensation. Disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid directly to the veteran by the USDVA. The amount of compensation

<sup>1</sup> Section 1.01(14), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, A Snapshot of Our Nation’s Veterans, <http://www.census.gov/library/infographics/veterans.html>, last viewed January 30, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs. *Fast Facts*. Available at: [http://floridavets.org/?page\\_id=50](http://floridavets.org/?page_id=50), last viewed January 30, 2015

<sup>4</sup> Office of the Actuary, Office of Policy and Planning. Department of Veterans Affairs. October 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs. *Fast Facts*. Available at: [http://floridavets.org/?page\\_id=50](http://floridavets.org/?page_id=50), last viewed January 30, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> 5 USC § 2108(2).

<sup>7</sup> 38 USC § 101(16).

varies with the degree of disability and the number of dependents the veteran has. After a medical examination, the USDVA assigns the veteran a disability rating in ten percent increments from 0 percent<sup>8</sup>-100 percent. This starts the process for which a disabled veteran is eligible to receive monthly disability compensation and certain USDVA medical benefits.<sup>9</sup>

There are instances in which a veteran's service-connected disability is not determined by the USDVA. In this instance, the Department of Defense (DoD) would determine the existence of a disability and provide compensation to the veteran. This is the case when a service member acquires a medical condition or physical disability that renders him or her unfit to perform his or her required duties while on active duty. The service member may be separated or retired from the military for medical reasons. The secretaries of the military departments have the authority to make the final determination of disability in each case.<sup>10</sup> When the determination has been made that a service member must retire due to medical reasons related to the member's service in the military, the member may decide whether to receive military retirement benefits from the DoD or disability compensation from the USDVA.

### **Employment Assistance for Veterans in Florida**

CareerSource Florida is a statewide program that connects employers with qualified, skilled talent and Floridians with employment and career development opportunities. There are 24 Regional Workforce Boards that oversee nearly 100 One-Stop Career Centers statewide. Each career center is equipped to help job seekers connect with businesses in their field, locate training opportunities, and teach skills such as resume writing and interview techniques. Within each career center are Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER).<sup>11</sup> DVOP specialists focus on intensive case management services for veterans with barriers to employment, particularly disabled veterans.<sup>12</sup> LVERs build relationships with employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives and managers to increase employment opportunities for veterans.<sup>13</sup> They are also responsible for ensuring that veterans receive the full range of priority workforce services in the One-Stop Career Centers.

Veterans may also utilize the Employ Florida Vets Marketplace, an online job search engine and portal administered by CareerSource Florida and the Department of Economic Opportunity and tailored to veterans.<sup>14</sup> Developed through a series of focus groups with Florida veterans, the Employ

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<sup>8</sup> A 0 percent disability rating means the USDVA has acknowledged a disability, but the disability is not severe enough to rate a monetary benefit. The disability can be reevaluated in the future if the disability worsens.

<sup>9</sup> Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors, Chapter 1 Health Care Benefits

[http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book/benefits\\_chap01.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap01.asp), last viewed January 17, 2014; Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors, Chapter 2 Service-Connected Disabilities, Disability Compensation,

[http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits\\_book/benefits\\_chap02.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap02.asp), last viewed January 17, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> 10 USC § 1201.

<sup>11</sup> In FY 2013-2014, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity was awarded approximately \$11.4 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Labor through the Jobs for Veterans' Grant to fund 104 DVOP and 72 LVER positions.

<sup>12</sup> DEO. Quick Facts Workforce Services: Services for Veterans. March 2014. Available at:

<http://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/office-of-workforce-services/services-for-vets.pdf?sfvrsn=2>, last viewed on February 2, 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Id.

<sup>14</sup> Employ Florida Vets Marketplace available at: <http://www.employflorida.com/portals/veteran/>, last viewed on February 2, 2015.

Florida Vets Portal translates a veteran's Military Occupational Specialty Code (a code that represents the employment classification for the specialty/job that the military veteran performed while on active duty) into an equivalent civilian job title.<sup>15</sup> In 2013-2014, there were approximately 40,000 visits to the portal.<sup>16</sup>

Florida's overall unemployment rate for the calendar year 2013 was 7.2%.<sup>17</sup> Unemployment rate among Florida veterans was 6.1%.<sup>18</sup> The national unemployment rate among Post-9/11 era veterans averaged 9.0%.

### **Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.**

During the 2014 Regular Session, the Legislature created Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. (FIFV), a non-profit corporation created within the Department of Veterans' Affairs.<sup>19</sup> The purpose of the FIFV is to promote Florida as a veteran-friendly state, encourage retired and recently separated military personnel to keep or make Florida their permanent residence, help equip veterans for employment opportunities, and promote the hiring of veterans.<sup>20</sup> The FIFV is governed by a nine-member board of directors in which the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives each appoint three members.

The FIFV is responsible for administering the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) program for the purpose of connecting veterans and employers.<sup>21</sup> Under the VETS program, the FIFV will create a grant program for businesses to train veterans to meet a business's workforce-skill needs and will set up a veteran-specific entrepreneur initiative program through a contract with one or more universities in Florida.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, as part of the VETS program, the FIFV is directed to provide one-on-one assistance to veterans seeking employment which may include skills assessments, resume creation, identification of employment goals, and referrals to One-Stop Career Centers. FIFV must also connect with employers in the state to educate them on the value of a veteran's military experience in the workplace.

### **Employment Initiatives for Small Businesses in Florida**

Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) markets the state's favorable business climate, infrastructure, workforce, trade, and quality of life to attract and retain businesses. For small businesses that choose Florida as a base of operations, EFI can connect them to a program offered in partnership with the DEO named the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). The SSBCI is federally funded to develop Florida specific programs that support lending to small businesses.<sup>23</sup> It is

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<sup>15</sup> Id at p. 47.

<sup>16</sup> Id.

<sup>17</sup> DEO. Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Annual Averages 2013.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment Situation of Veterans – 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Chapter 2014-1, L.O.F.

<sup>20</sup> Section 295.21, F.S.

<sup>21</sup> Section 295.22, F.S.

<sup>22</sup> During the 2014 Regular Session, the FIFV was allocated \$2 million for the veterans training grant program and \$1 million for the entrepreneur initiative program. See HB 5001 (2014 Reg. Session).

<sup>23</sup> Florida has received \$97,662,349 to date in SSBCI funding from the U.S. Department of Treasury. As a result, the state is expected to leverage nearly \$1 billion in private lending to Florida small businesses.

designed to assist small businesses in obtaining loan approvals and leverage private capital for use in startup costs, working capital, business procurement, franchise fees, equipment, inventory, or the purchase of owner-occupied commercial real estate.

The Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network is another resource available to small business owners seeking assistance. The SBDC is designated as the principal business organization for small businesses in the state.<sup>24</sup> The purpose of the network is to serve emerging and established for-profit, privately held businesses that maintain a place of business in the state. It is principally funded by the Small Business Administration (SBA), but administered by the Department of Economic Opportunity. It directs entrepreneurs and small business owners to technical training on business operations and federal incentive programs.

There are currently no state incentive programs to encourage Florida small businesses to hire veterans.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill creates s. 295.24, F.S., to establish the Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program (program). The program is created within the Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) and is to be administered by Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. This program is an incentive based program created to stimulate investment in the state's economy by providing grants to small business that hire honorably discharged veterans or veterans with a service-connected disability.

The bill defines a small business as a business that:

- Is independently owned and operated;
- Is for-profit and privately held;
- Employs fewer than 200 persons;
- Generates \$2 million or less in annual revenue; and
- Has maintained its principal place of business in this state for at least the previous 4 calendar years.

A qualifying small business may receive up to \$25,000 per fiscal year for hiring honorably discharged veterans and veterans with service-connected disabilities. A qualifying small business that hires a veteran as an employee may be eligible to receive a one-time grant of:

- \$3,000 for each veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14), F.S.; and
- \$5,000 for each disabled veteran, as described in s. 295.07(1)(a)1.

A small business may receive an additional \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran whose employment is continued beyond an initial 12-month period and an additional \$1,000 for each veteran hired through the services of a regional workforce board. These additional awards are not restricted by the \$25,000 cap noted above.

In order to qualify for grant funding, a small business must enter into an agreement with FIFV that requires the small business to:

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<sup>24</sup> Section 288.001, F.S.

- Employ a qualifying veteran for at least 6 months in order to become eligible for grant funding;
- Provide a report with information on the employment status of each qualifying veteran upon the request of FIFV;
- Pay each qualifying veteran an amount equal to at least 80% of the annual median income for veterans in Florida based on the most recent federal census or the most recent American Community Survey 5-year estimated published by the U.S. Census Bureau;
- Reinvest any awarded grant moneys in the small business to facilitate further job creation; and
- Not receive an additional award for hiring a veteran previously claimed as an employee within the same small business for purposes of obtaining funds under the program.

FIFV must notify the appropriate regional small business center of a small business' participation in the grant program in order to facilitate improved access to the resources of the Florida Small Business Development Center.

The bill authorizes the FDVA to develop rules for the implementation of the program to include, but not limited to, specifying requirements for the application and approval process and the documentation necessary to claim the moneys available through the grant program

The bill appropriates \$10 million in non-recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to FDVA for transfer to FIFV to implement and administer the program. FIFV may award grant moneys up to a maximum of \$800,000 per fiscal year to small businesses and is authorized to expend no more than \$150,000 annually of the funds transferred to FIFV by FDVA for staffing and administrative costs. Upon the termination of the program, all remaining funds return to the General Revenue Fund.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2015.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

##### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

##### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

##### **C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

#### **V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

##### **A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

Businesses that choose to participate in the program may be eligible to receive up to \$25,000 per fiscal year for hiring honorably discharged veterans and veterans with service-connected disabilities. Small businesses may apply to receive:

- \$3,000 for hiring an honorably discharged veteran; and
- \$5,000 for hiring a veteran with a service-connected disability

Small businesses may also apply for additional awards that are not restricted by the \$25,000 limit:

- \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran whose employment extends beyond the initial 12-month period; and
- \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran hired through a regional workforce board.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The bill appropriates \$10 million in non-recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to FDVA for transfer to FIFV to implement and administer the program. FIFV may award grant moneys up to a maximum of \$800,000 per fiscal year to small businesses and FIFV is authorized to expend no more than \$150,000 annually for staffing and administrative costs.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill creates section 295.24 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:****A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security on February 3, 2015:**

The committee substitute makes the following changes:

- Changes the administering agency of the grant program from the Department of Economic Opportunity to the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) and directs Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. (FIFV) to manage the program.
- Directs FDVA to transfer the \$10 million appropriation to FIFV for implementation and administration of the program.

- Authorizes FIFV to spend no more than \$150,000 per year for staffing and administrative costs to implement and administer the program.
- Stipulates that a small business may not receive grant funding until the qualifying veteran has been employed by the business for at least 6 months.

B. Amendments:

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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178142

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/03/2015	.	
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The Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security (Evers) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert:

Section 1. Section 295.24, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

295.24 Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program.—  
The Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program is created  
within the Department of Veterans' Affairs to be administered by  
Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. The purpose of the program is to



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11 stimulate investment in the state's economy by providing grants  
12 to small businesses that hire and employ honorably discharged  
13 veterans or disabled veterans with a service-connected  
14 disability.

15 (1) As used in this section, the term:

16 (a) "Corporation" means Florida Is For Veterans, Inc.

17 (b) "Small business" means an independently owned and  
18 operated, for-profit, and privately held business that employs  
19 200 or fewer persons; generates \$2 million or less in annual  
20 revenue; and has maintained its principal place of business in  
21 this state for at least the previous 4 calendar years.

22 (2) The corporation may accept and administer moneys  
23 appropriated to the corporation for providing grants to  
24 encourage small businesses in this state to hire and employ  
25 veterans.

26 (3) A small business that hires a veteran as an employee  
27 may receive a one-time grant of:

28 (a) Three thousand dollars for each veteran, as defined in  
29 s. 1.01(14).

30 (b) Five thousand dollars for each disabled veteran, as  
31 described in s. 295.07(1)(a)1.

32 (c) One thousand dollars for each qualifying veteran whose  
33 employment is continued beyond an initial 12-month period.

34 (4) The grants awarded to a given small business under  
35 paragraphs (3)(a) and (b) may not exceed \$25,000 per fiscal  
36 year.

37 (5) A small business must apply to and enter into an  
38 agreement with the corporation in order to participate in the  
39 program. The agreement must require that the small business:



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40           (a) Employ a qualifying veteran for at least 6 months in  
41 order to become eligible for grants awarded under paragraphs  
42 (3) (a) and (b).

43           (b) Upon the request of the corporation, report information  
44 regarding the employment status of each qualifying veteran.

45           (c) Pay each qualifying veteran an amount equal to at least  
46 80 percent of the annual median income for veterans in this  
47 state based on the most recent federal census or the most recent  
48 American Community Survey 5-year estimates published by the  
49 United States Census Bureau.

50           (d) Reinvest any awarded grant moneys in the small business  
51 to facilitate further job creation.

52           (e) Not receive an additional award for rehiring a veteran  
53 previously claimed as an employee within the same small business  
54 for purposes of obtaining funds under the program.

55           (6) The corporation may award a small business that uses  
56 the services of a regional workforce board in hiring a veteran  
57 an additional one-time grant of \$1,000 for each qualifying  
58 veteran.

59           (7) The corporation shall notify the regional small  
60 business center serving the county in which a participating  
61 small business is located of a small business's participation in  
62 the grant program in order to facilitate improved access to the  
63 resources of the Florida Small Business Development Center  
64 Network.

65           (8) The Department of Veterans' Affairs may adopt rules to  
66 implement and administer this section, including, but not  
67 limited to, rules specifying requirements for the application  
68 and approval process and the documentation necessary to claim



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69 grant moneys awarded under this section.

70 Section 2. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of \$10  
71 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is  
72 appropriated to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for transfer  
73 to Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., to implement and administer  
74 this act. The corporation may award grant moneys up to a maximum  
75 of \$800,000 per fiscal year. The corporation may spend up to  
76 \$150,000 per fiscal year of funds transferred by the department  
77 for staffing and administrative costs associated with  
78 implementation and administration of the program. Upon  
79 termination of the program, all remaining appropriated funds  
80 shall revert to the General Revenue Fund.

81 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.

82  
83 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

84 And the title is amended as follows:

85 Delete everything before the enacting clause  
86 and insert:

87 A bill to be entitled  
88 An act relating to small business financial  
89 assistance; creating s. 295.24, F.S.; creating the  
90 Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program  
91 within the Department of Veterans' Affairs; directing  
92 Florida Is For Veterans, Inc., to administer the  
93 program; defining terms; authorizing the corporation  
94 to accept and administer moneys appropriated for such  
95 grants; specifying grant amounts; limiting the amount  
96 that a small business may receive under the program;  
97 requiring a small business to apply to and enter into



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98 an agreement with the corporation to receive grants;  
99 providing requirements for participation in the  
100 program; providing that a small business may not  
101 receive an additional award for rehiring a veteran  
102 previously claimed as an employee for purposes of  
103 obtaining funds under the program; authorizing the  
104 corporation to award an additional grant to a small  
105 business under specified circumstances; requiring the  
106 corporation to notify the appropriate regional small  
107 business center of a small business's participation;  
108 authorizing the department to adopt rules; providing  
109 an appropriation; providing an effective date.

By Senator Garcia

38-00098-15

2015292\_\_

1 A bill to be entitled  
 2 An act relating to small business financial  
 3 assistance; creating s. 288.066, F.S.; creating the  
 4 Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program  
 5 within the Department of Economic Opportunity;  
 6 defining the term "small business"; authorizing the  
 7 department to accept and administer moneys  
 8 appropriated for such grants; specifying grant  
 9 amounts; limiting the amount that a small business may  
 10 receive under the program; requiring a small business  
 11 to apply to and enter into an agreement with the  
 12 department to receive grants; providing requirements  
 13 for participation in the program; providing that a  
 14 small business may not receive an additional award for  
 15 hiring a veteran previously claimed as an employee for  
 16 purposes of obtaining funds under the program;  
 17 authorizing the department to award an additional  
 18 grant to a small business under specified  
 19 circumstances; requiring the department to notify the  
 20 appropriate regional small business center of a small  
 21 business' participation; authorizing the department to  
 22 adopt rules; providing an appropriation; providing an  
 23 effective date.

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

26  
 27 Section 1. Section 288.066, Florida Statutes, is created to  
 28 read:  
 29 288.066 Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program.-

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**CODING:** Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

38-00098-15

2015292\_\_

30 The Veterans Employment Small Business Grant Program is created  
 31 within the department. The purpose of the program is to  
 32 stimulate investment in the state's economy by providing grants  
 33 to small businesses that hire and employ honorably discharged  
 34 veterans or disabled veterans with a service-connected  
 35 disability.

36 (1) As used in this section, the term "small business"  
 37 means an independently owned and operated, for-profit, and  
 38 privately held business that employs 200 or fewer persons;  
 39 generates \$2 million or less in annual revenue; and has  
 40 maintained its principal place of business in this state for at  
 41 least the previous 4 calendar years.

42 (2) The department may accept and administer moneys  
 43 appropriated to the department for providing grants to encourage  
 44 small businesses in this state to hire and employ veterans.

45 (3) A small business that hires a veteran as an employee  
 46 may receive a one-time grant of:

47 (a) \$3,000 for each veteran, as defined in s. 1.01(14).

48 (b) \$5,000 for each disabled veteran, as described in s.  
 49 295.07(1)(a)1.

50 (c) \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran whose employment is  
 51 continued beyond an initial 12-month period.

52 (4) The grants awarded to a small business under paragraphs  
 53 (3)(a) and (b) may not exceed \$25,000 per fiscal year.

54 (5) A small business must apply to and enter into an  
 55 agreement with the department in order to participate in the  
 56 program. The agreement must require that the small business:

57 (a) Reimburse the department for any awarded grant moneys  
 58 if the qualifying veteran does not remain employed with the

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**CODING:** Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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59 small business for at least 1 year following an award.

60 (b) Upon the request of the department, report information  
61 regarding the employment status of each qualifying veteran.

62 (c) Pay each qualifying veteran an amount equal to at least  
63 80 percent of the annual median income for veterans in this  
64 state based on the most recent federal census or the most recent  
65 American Community Survey 5-year estimates published by the  
66 United States Census Bureau.

67 (d) Reinvest any awarded grant moneys in the small business  
68 to facilitate further job creation.

69 (e) Not receive an additional award for hiring a veteran  
70 previously claimed as an employee for purposes of obtaining  
71 funds under the program.

72 (6) The department may award the small business an  
73 additional one-time grant of \$1,000 for each qualifying veteran  
74 if it used the services of a regional workforce board in hiring  
75 the veteran.

76 (7) The department shall notify the regional small business  
77 center serving the county in which a participating small  
78 business is located of a small business' participation in the  
79 grant program in order to facilitate improved access to the  
80 resources of the Florida Small Business Development Center  
81 Network.

82 (8) The department may adopt rules to implement and  
83 administer this section, including, but not limited to, rules  
84 specifying requirements for the application and approval process  
85 and the documentation necessary to claim grant moneys awarded  
86 under this section.

87 Section 2. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of \$10

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88 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is  
89 appropriated to the Department of Economic Opportunity to  
90 implement and administer this act. The department may award  
91 grant moneys up to a maximum of \$800,000 per fiscal year. Upon  
92 termination of the program, all remaining appropriated funds  
93 shall revert to the General Revenue Fund.

94 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.

THE FLORIDA SENATE  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)

2/3/15

Meeting Date

SB 292

Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic SB 292 Small Business

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name David Cruz

Job Title Assistant General Counsel

Address P.O. Box 1757

Phone 701-3676

Street

Tallahassee

City

FL

State

32302

Zip

Email dcruz@flcities.com

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against  
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Florida League of Cities

Appearing at request of Chair:  Yes  No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:  Yes  No

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**This form is part of the public record for this meeting.**

S-001 (10/14/14)

THE FLORIDA SENATE  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)

2/3/15

Meeting Date

292

Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Bobby Carbonell

Job Title Executive Director

Address 400 S. Monroe

Street

Phone 850-321-6010

Tallahassee

City

FL

State

32359

Zip

Email bobby.carbonell1@gmail.com

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against  
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Florida is for Veterans, Inc

Appearing at request of Chair:  Yes  No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:  Yes  No

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S-001 (10/14/14)

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2/3/2015

Meeting Date

292

Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Abby Kinch

Job Title President, Collegiate Veterans Association @ FSU

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 850-264-7948

Street

Email akinch@fsu.edu

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against  
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Student Veterans

Appearing at request of Chair:  Yes  No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:  Yes  No

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S-001 (10/14/14)

THE FLORIDA SENATE  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

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2/3/15  
Meeting Date

292  
Bill Number (if applicable)

178142  
Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Name Bobby Carbonell

Job Title Executive Director

Address 400 S. Monroe St.

Phone 850-321-6010

Street

Tallahassee

FL

32399

City

State

Zip

Email bobby.carbonell1@gmail.com

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against  
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Florida is for Veterans, Inc.

Appearing at request of Chair:  Yes  No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:  Yes  No

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# Florida Defense Support Task Force

Briefing to Senate Committee  
on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space,  
and Domestic Security  
February 3, 2015



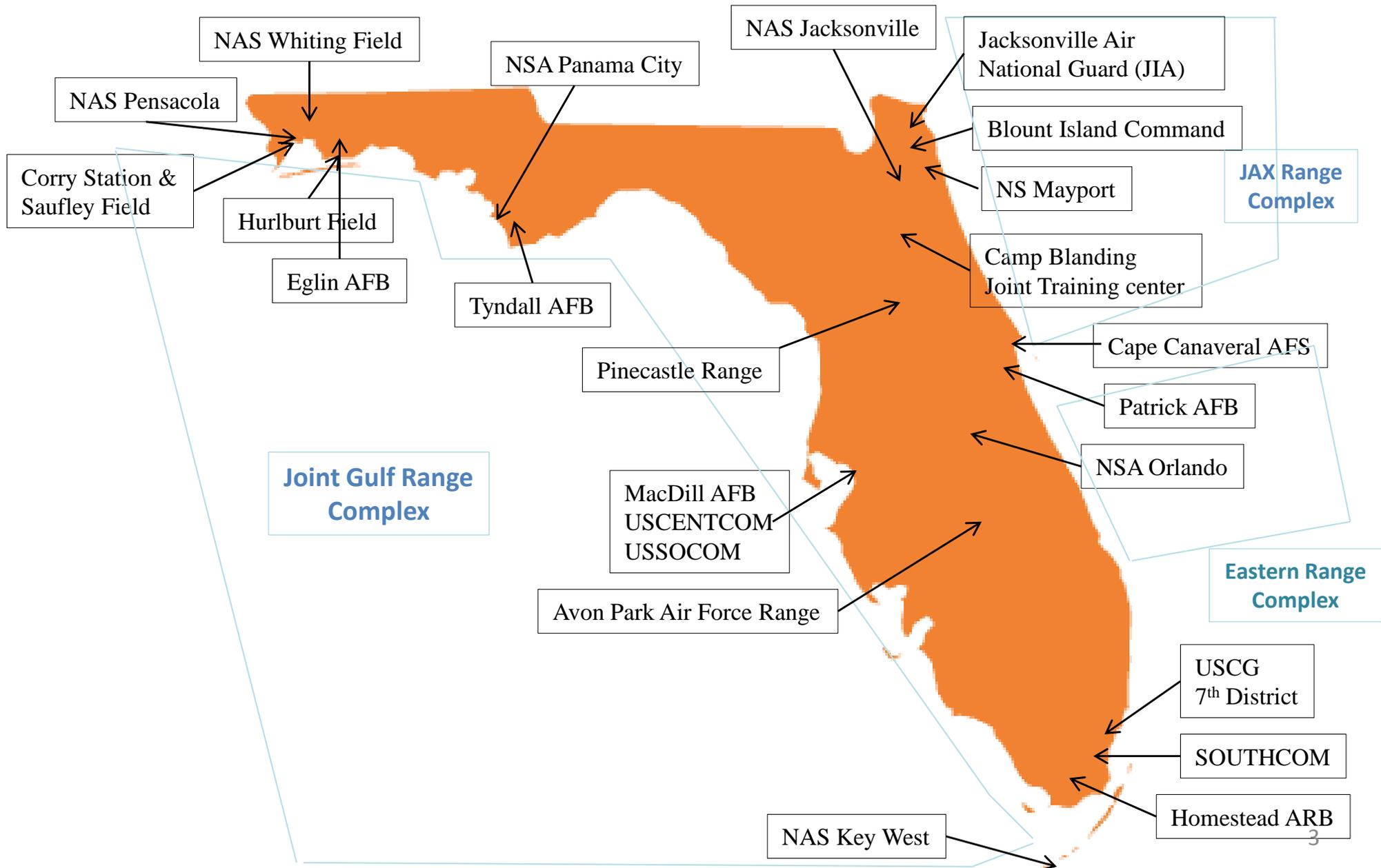
# Florida' Military Presence

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## Overview:

- 20 major military installations.
- \$73.4 billion annual impact from military and defense business presence.
- 758,112 direct and indirect jobs.
- Defense is 3<sup>rd</sup> largest contributor to state economy.
- Optimum training environment; extensive ranges.

# Florida's Military Installations



# History

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- Task Force created in 2011 --F.S. 288.987. With Sunshine exemption – F.S. 288.985
- Replaced the Florida Council on Military Bases and Mission Support.
- 13 Members -- appointed by Governor, Senate and House.
- FY 2011-2012 funding -- \$5 million.
- FY 2012-2013 funding -- \$2 million
- FY 2013-2014 funding -- \$4 million
- FY 2014- 2015 funding -- \$3.5 million

# Members

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- Rep. Ritch Workman – Chair -- House (New/Returning Member)
- Rep. Clay Ingram– House (New Member)
- BG Chip Diehl -- House
- Dr. Ed Naggiar -- House
- James Montgomerie– Senate (New Member)
- Judge Patt Maney -- Senate
- J.R. McDonald -- Senate
- Tom Neubauer -- Senate
- Rep. Dana Young– Governor’s Personal Rep.
- MG Emmett Titshaw, Adjutant General – Governor
- Barbara Stewart -- Governor
- RADM Kevin Delaney-- Governor
- MG Joseph Taluto -- Governor

# Florida Defense Support Task Force

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Governor's Guidance:

***“Keep Florida the most  
military-friendly state  
in the nation.”***

Task Force Mission:

Preserve, protect and enhance Florida's  
military missions and installations

Overall role -- Provide administrative support for the Florida Defense Support Task Force.

Specifically:

-- Personnel: Executive Director, Grants Coordinator and Administrative Assistant.

-- Organize and support 10 meetings annually.

Coordinate base visits.

-- Manage the budget.

-- Provide communications support: web site, weekly updates, current military/defense information.

# Florida Defense Support Task Force is charged to:

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- Maintain and expand the missions of Florida's military installations
- Work with Florida's Base Commanders to prevent encroachment from impacting mission capabilities of military forces based in Florida
  - Improve transportation access to Florida's military installations
  - Assist installations in meeting DOD renewable energy goals
  - Strengthen state support for military families and veterans with a focus on education, health care, employment, and family programs.

# Ongoing Actions

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- Aggressive advocacy based on results of installation assessments at both national and state level. Focus on installation-specific needs. Prepare for possible BRAC/ongoing defense budget cuts.
- **Work with Governor, Legislature, Florida Congressional delegation, base commanders and local defense community leaders to improve military value of all installations**

# Task Force Successes

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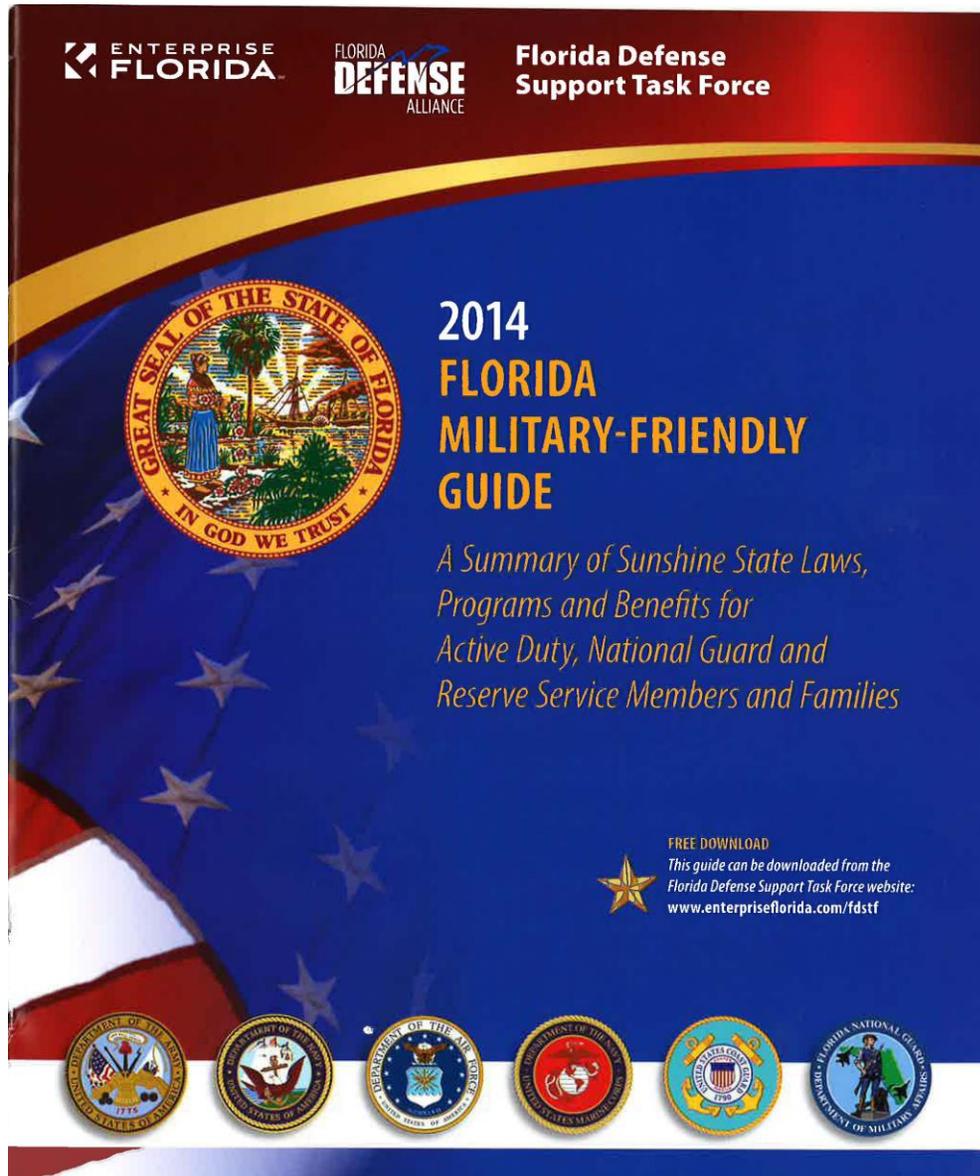
- Developed long term strategic plan.
- Established web site and provided members with weekly updates on military and defense issues.
- Implemented a grant program to assist local defense communities improve the military value of their bases.
- Conducted comprehensive evaluation and risk assessment of all military installations in the state.

## Task Force Successes (cont.)

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- Contracted for full-time first class advocacy services in Washington, DC to assist efforts in protecting and enhancing Florida military bases.
- Published defense fact book and military-friendly guide.
- Supported military-friendly legislation.

# 2014 Military Friendly Guide



# Task Force Grant Award History

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FY 2013 -- 9 grants -- \$ 2.41 million

FY 2014 -- 9 grants -- \$ 2.22 million

FY 2015 -- 14 grants -- \$ 2.59 million

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Total \$ 7.22 million

# Recent Military Friendly Legislation

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- Florida GI Bill -- \$7 million for Non-Conservation Base Buffering Program
- Late Voter Registration for Deployed Military Members
- Interstate Compact for Military Children
- Licensure accommodations for military family members
- Driver's license extensions for FL military while out-of-state
- In state tuition for all military veterans

## Strengthening FL Military – Two Studies

1. Linkages Study – Identifies the connectivity, interdependent functions and linkages between and among Florida’s military installations and missions with the goal of clarifying and graphically portraying the Florida Federal Military Complex.
2. Best Practices Study – Determines state and local best practices from selected US states and communities hosting military installations to protect, sustain and enhance military bases and missions.

*Both studies being finalized; should be ready by mid-Feb.*

# Florida Defense Support Task Force

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Questions ?



# Florida Defense Support Task Force

Briefing to Senate Committee  
on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space,  
and Domestic Security  
February 3, 2015



THE FLORIDA SENATE  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)

FEB 3, 2015  
Meeting Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name BRUCE GRANT

Job Title EXEC DIRECTOR, FL DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

Address 101 N. MONROE ST SUITE 1000  
Street

Phone 878-0826

TALLAHASSEE FL 32301  
City State Zip

Email BGRANT@CFORIDA.COM

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against  
(The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing FLORIDA DEFENSE SUPPORT TASK FORCE

Appearing at request of Chair:  Yes  No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature:  Yes  No

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THE FLORIDA SENATE

APPEARANCE RECORD

(Deliver BOTH copies of this form to the Senator or Senate Professional Staff conducting the meeting)

2/3/15

Meeting Date

Bill Number (if applicable)

Topic Defense Budgets

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Col. Rocky McPherson, USMC (Ret.)

Job Title VP, Military & Defense Program, Antiquaire Florissant

Address 101 N. Monroe St., Suite 1000

Phone

Street

Tallahassee, FL 32301

City

State

Zip

Email

Speaking: [X] For [ ] Against [ ] Information

Waive Speaking: [ ] In Support [ ] Against (The Chair will read this information into the record.)

Representing Antiquaire Florissant, Inc

Appearing at request of Chair: [X] Yes [ ] No

Lobbyist registered with Legislature: [ ] Yes [X] No

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S-001 (10/14/14)

# CourtSmart Tag Report

**Room:** LL 37

**Case:**

**Type:**

**Caption:** Senate Military and Veterans Affairs, Space and Domestic Security Committee

**Judge:**

**Started:** 2/3/2015 10:11:40 AM

**Ends:** 2/3/2015 10:51:06 AM **Length:** 00:39:27

**10:12:10 AM** Chair Altman ask for the committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space and Domestic Security to come to order and silence all electronic devices

**10:12:19 AM** Chair Altman ask Lois to call the roll and Lois announces that a quorum is present

**10:12:24 AM** Chair Altman ask Senator Garcia to present SB 292 - Small Business Financial Assistance

**10:13:22 AM** Senator Garcia presents the bill

**10:13:31 AM** Senator Sachs ask a few questions

**10:13:48 AM** Senator Garcia answers

**10:14:16 AM** Senator Sachs ask Chair Altman if the staff could look into veterans who have businesses or who can start up their own businesses

**10:14:52 AM** Senator Gibson ask a question regarding veterans who can start their own business

**10:15:21 AM** Mr. Bobby Carbonell, Executive Director, Florida is for Veterans, Inc. answers the question

**10:16:00 AM** Chair Altman states that there is a late filed Amendment by Senator Evers

**10:16:17 AM** Senator Evers presents Amendment barcode 178142

**10:17:03 AM** Chair Altman ask if there are any questions on the Amendment

**10:17:15 AM** Mr. Bobby Carbonell spoke in favor of the Amendment

**10:17:45 AM** Senator Gibson ask a question regarding the Amendment

**10:17:57 AM** Senator Garcia answers

**10:18:02 AM** Senator Stargel ask a question regarding the Amendment

**10:18:11 AM** Senator Garcia answers

**10:18:24 AM** Senator Evers makes a statement regarding the Amendment

**10:18:33 AM** Senator Garcia makes a comment on the Amendment

**10:18:58 AM** Chair Altman ask for debate on the Amendment. The Amendment is adopted.

**10:19:22 AM** Chair Altman states that we are back on the bill as amended and states that there are some appearance cards

**10:19:32 AM** Mr. David Cruz, Assistant General Counsel, FL League of Cities waives his time in support

**10:19:41 AM** Ms. Abby Kinch, President, Collegiate Veterans Association @ FSU speaks in favor of the bill as amended

**10:20:24 AM** Chair Altman gives thanks and a brief statement regarding the veterans in this state and for Ms. Kinch for being at the meeting

**10:20:49 AM** Senator Sachs ask a question regarding the funds to DEO

**10:21:13 AM** Mr. Carbonell answers

**10:21:56 AM** Senator Sachs ask for a follow-up question

**10:22:04 AM** Mr. Carbonell answers

**10:22:16 AM** Chair Altman ask if there were additional questions or debate

**10:22:27 AM** Chair Altman ask Senator Garcia to close on the bill as amended

**10:22:48 AM** Senator Garcia closes on the bill

**10:23:39 AM** Chair Altman ask Lois to call roll on CS for SB 292

**10:23:53 AM** Lois calls the roll on CS for SB 292

**10:24:10 AM** Chair Altman states by your vote CS for SB 292 is reported favorably. Chair Altman ask Mr. Grant to come forward for his presentation

**10:25:05 AM** Tab 2 - Presentation by Dr. Bruce Grant, Executive Director, Florida Defense Support Task Force

**10:38:05 AM** Chair Altman thanks Mr. Grant for being here today and ask for questions or discussion

**10:38:14 AM** Senator Gibson ask a question regarding the land purchases and encroachment

**10:39:07 AM** Mr. Grant answers question

**10:40:28 AM** Senator Gibson ask a follow-up question

**10:41:00 AM** Mr. Grant makes a statement regarding Senator Gibson's question

**10:41:37 AM** Senator Gibson ask Chair Altman if the committee could have the DEP staff to present at a meeting

**10:41:46 AM** Chair Altman makes a statement regarding Senator Gibson concerns

**10:41:57 AM** Chair makes a statement regarding the sale of encroachment property

**10:42:37 AM** Senator Sachs makes a statement regarding the land purchase to Chair Altman

**10:42:50 AM** Chair Altman comments

**10:43:31 AM** Senator Gibson makes a statement regarding a packet on the parcels

**10:43:47 AM** Chair Altman states that he and staff will get together regarding the parcels packet

**10:43:57 AM** Chair Altman ask if there were additional questions. He ask Mr. Grant a few questions

**10:44:21 AM** Mr. Grant answers the questions

**10:47:49 AM** Chair Altman ask a follow-up question

**10:48:06 AM** Col. Rocky McPherson, USMC (Ret.) VP, Military & Defense Program answers questions regarding the U.S. President's budget

**10:49:09 AM** Chair Altman makes a statement regarding the budget

**10:50:07 AM** Col. McPherson gives a statement regarding the budget

**10:50:29 AM** Chair Altman ask if there are additional questions

**10:50:42 AM** No questions

**10:50:45 AM** Senator Evers without objection moves to rise