

## Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

### **CS/HB 635 — Dental Services for Veterans**

by Local Administration, Federal Affairs, and Special Districts Subcommittee and Rep. Maney and others (CS/SB 366 by Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security Committee and Senators Burgess, Perry, and Gruters)

The bill establishes the Veterans Dental Care Grant Program within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The purpose of the program is to provide dental care to in-state veterans.

Eligible veterans are those who have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, Space Force, Florida National Guard, and the United States Reserve Forces. To further qualify, a veteran must have been honorably released from service or later received an upgraded discharge under honorable conditions.

The bill requires the department to contract with a statewide direct-support organization (DSO) to administer the program. The DSO must have proven experience in establishing and implementing veteran programs, including those that provide dental services. The DSO will distribute grants to eligible nonprofits that have experience in providing dental care to veterans.

Funding for the program is subject to legislative appropriation. No funding was provided for the program in SB 2500 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2023.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0*