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1  
2 An act relating to military and veterans affairs;  
3 creating s. 83.683, F.S.; requiring a landlord, a  
4 condominium association, a cooperative association, or  
5 a homeowners' association to complete the processing  
6 of a rental application submitted by a servicemember  
7 within a specified timeframe; providing applicability;  
8 amending s. 322.08, F.S.; requiring the application  
9 form for an original, renewal, or replacement driver  
10 license or identification card to include a voluntary  
11 checkoff authorizing veterans to request written or  
12 electronic information on federal, state, and local  
13 benefits and services for veterans; requiring the  
14 requested information to be delivered by a third-party  
15 provider; requiring the Department of Highway Safety  
16 and Motor Vehicles to report monthly to the Department  
17 of Veterans' Affairs the names and mailing or e-mail  
18 addresses of veterans who request information;  
19 requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs to  
20 disseminate veteran contact information to the third-  
21 party provider; requiring that the third-party  
22 provider be a nonprofit organization; defining the  
23 term "nonprofit organization"; requiring that the  
24 Department of Veterans' Affairs provide veteran  
25 contact information to the appropriate county or city  
26 veteran service officer; specifying that a third-party  
27 provider may use veteran contact information only as  
28 authorized; prohibiting a third-party provider from  
29 selling veteran contact information; requiring a

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30 third-party provider to maintain confidentiality of  
31 veteran contact information under specified  
32 provisions; providing a penalty; amending s. 265.003,  
33 F.S.; defining the term "veteran" or "military  
34 veteran" for purposes of determining persons the  
35 Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council may consider as  
36 nominees for the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame;  
37 creating s. 489.1131, F.S.; directing the Department  
38 of Business and Professional Regulation to provide a  
39 method by which honorably discharged veterans may  
40 apply for construction contracting licensure;  
41 authorizing the Construction Industry Licensing Board  
42 to adopt rules; directing the department, in  
43 conjunction with the board, to annually prepare and  
44 submit a specified report to the Governor and  
45 Legislature; amending s. 489.511, F.S.; revising  
46 eligibility criteria for taking the electrical or  
47 alarm system contractor certification examination;  
48 creating s. 489.5161, F.S.; directing the Department  
49 of Business and Professional Regulation to provide a  
50 method by which honorably discharged veterans may  
51 apply for electrical or alarm system contracting  
52 licensure; authorizing the Electrical Contractors'  
53 Licensing Board to adopt rules; directing the  
54 department, in conjunction with the board, to annually  
55 prepare and submit a specified report to the Governor  
56 and Legislature; creating s. 493.61035, F.S.;

57 directing the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
58 Services to provide a method by which honorably

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59 discharged veterans may apply for private  
60 investigative, private security, and repossession  
61 services licensure; authorizing the department to  
62 adopt rules; directing the department to annually  
63 prepare and submit a specified report to the Governor  
64 and Legislature; directing the Department of Highway  
65 Safety and Motor Vehicles and the Department of  
66 Military Affairs to conduct a commercial motor vehicle  
67 driver license testing pilot program; specifying  
68 testing locations and funding; requiring the  
69 departments to submit a report to the Legislature by a  
70 specified date; providing for repeal of the program;  
71 creating the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance  
72 Task Force within the Department of State; specifying  
73 membership of the task force; authorizing  
74 reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses;  
75 prescribing duties of the task force; requiring  
76 submission of a report to the Governor and the  
77 Legislature by a specified date; providing for  
78 expiration of the task force; providing for staffing;  
79 providing an effective date.

80

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

82

83 Section 1. Section 83.683, Florida Statutes, is created to  
84 read:

85 83.683 Rental application by a servicemember.—

86 (1) If a landlord requires a prospective tenant to complete  
87 a rental application before residing in a rental unit, the

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88 landlord must complete processing of a rental application  
89 submitted by a prospective tenant who is a servicemember, as  
90 defined in s. 250.01, within 7 days after submission and must,  
91 within that 7-day period, notify the servicemember in writing of  
92 an application approval or denial and, if denied, the reason for  
93 denial. Absent a timely denial of the rental application, the  
94 landlord must lease the rental unit to the servicemember if all  
95 other terms of the application and lease are complied with.

96 (2) If a condominium association, as defined in chapter  
97 718, a cooperative association, as defined in chapter 719, or a  
98 homeowners' association, as defined in chapter 720, requires a  
99 prospective tenant of a condominium unit, cooperative unit, or  
100 parcel within the association's control to complete a rental  
101 application before residing in a rental unit or parcel, the  
102 association must complete processing of a rental application  
103 submitted by a prospective tenant who is a servicemember, as  
104 defined in s. 250.01, within 7 days after submission and must,  
105 within that 7-day period, notify the servicemember in writing of  
106 an application approval or denial and, if denied, the reason for  
107 denial. Absent a timely denial of the rental application, the  
108 association must allow the unit or parcel owner to lease the  
109 rental unit or parcel to the servicemember and the landlord must  
110 lease the rental unit or parcel to the servicemember if all  
111 other terms of the application and lease are complied with.

112 (3) The provisions of this section may not be waived or  
113 modified by the agreement of the parties under any  
114 circumstances.

115 Section 2. Present subsection (9) of section 322.08,  
116 Florida Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (10), and a new

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117 subsection (9) is added to that section, to read:

118       322.08 Application for license; requirements for license  
119 and identification card forms.—

120       (9) (a) To support the carrying out of the duties of the  
121 Department of Veterans' Affairs prescribed in s. 292.05 and to  
122 facilitate its outreach to veterans residing in this state, the  
123 application form for an original, a renewal, or a replacement  
124 driver license or identification card must include a voluntary  
125 checkoff authorizing a veteran of the United States Armed Forces  
126 to request written or electronic information on federal, state,  
127 and local benefits and services available to veterans. The  
128 veteran may elect to receive requested information through  
129 United States mail or by e-mail. The requested information shall  
130 be delivered to the veteran by any third-party provider selected  
131 by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to act on its behalf.

132       (b) The department shall collaborate with the Department of  
133 Veterans' Affairs to administer this subsection. The department  
134 shall report monthly to the Department of Veterans' Affairs the  
135 name and mailing address or e-mail address of each veteran who  
136 requests information as provided in paragraph (a). Following  
137 receipt of the monthly report, the Department of Veterans'  
138 Affairs shall disseminate the contact information for each such  
139 veteran to the third-party provider acting on its behalf. The  
140 third-party provider must be a nonprofit organization with  
141 sufficient ability to communicate with veterans residing  
142 throughout this state. For purposes of this paragraph, the term  
143 "nonprofit organization" means an organization exempt from the  
144 federal income tax under s. 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of  
145 1986 or any federal, state, or local governmental entity.

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146       (c) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (b), the  
147 Department of Veterans' Affairs shall disseminate the contact  
148 information for a veteran who selects the voluntary checkoff to  
149 the appropriate county or city veteran service officer in order  
150 to facilitate further outreach to veterans.

151       (d)1. The contact information of a veteran which is  
152 obtained by a third-party provider pursuant to this subsection  
153 may be used only as authorized by this subsection. The third-  
154 party provider may not sell such contact information. Except as  
155 otherwise provided, the third-party provider must maintain the  
156 confidentiality of the contact information in accordance with  
157 chapter 119 and the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of  
158 1994, 18 U.S.C. ss. 2721 et seq.

159       2. A person who willfully and knowingly violates this  
160 paragraph commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable  
161 as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

162       Section 3. Subsection (4) of section 265.003, Florida  
163 Statutes, is amended to read:

164       265.003 Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.—

165       (4) (a) The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council shall  
166 annually accept nominations of persons to be considered for  
167 induction into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame and shall  
168 transmit a list of up to 20 nominees to the Department of  
169 Veterans' Affairs for submission to the Governor and the Cabinet  
170 who will select the nominees to be inducted.

171       (b) In selecting its nominees for submission to the  
172 Governor and the Cabinet, the ~~Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame~~  
173 council shall give preference to veterans who were born in  
174 Florida or adopted Florida as their home state or base of

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175 operation and who have made a significant contribution to the  
176 state in civic, business, public service, or other pursuits.

177 (c) For purposes of this section, the term "veteran" or  
178 "military veteran" means a person who meets the definition of  
179 the term in s. 1.01(14) or a former member of the Florida  
180 National Guard.

181 Section 4. Section 489.1131, Florida Statutes, is created  
182 to read:

183 489.1131 Credit for relevant military training and  
184 education.-

185 (1) The department shall provide a method by which  
186 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The  
187 method must include a veteran-specific application and provide:

188 (a) To the fullest extent possible, credit toward the  
189 requirements for licensure for military experience, training,  
190 and education received and completed during service in the  
191 United States Armed Forces if the military experience, training,  
192 or education is substantially similar to the experience,  
193 training, or education required for licensure.

194 (b) Acceptance of up to 3 years of active duty service in  
195 the United States Armed Forces, regardless of duty or training,  
196 to meet the experience requirements of s. 489.111(2)(c). At  
197 least 1 additional year of active experience as a foreman in the  
198 trade, either civilian or military, is required to fulfill the  
199 experience requirement of s. 489.111(2)(c).

200  
201 The board may adopt rules pursuant to s. 120.536(1) and s.  
202 120.54 to implement this subsection.

203 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning

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204 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the department, in  
205 conjunction with the board, is directed to prepare and submit a  
206 report titled "Construction and Electrical Contracting Veteran  
207 Applicant Statistics" to the Governor, the President of the  
208 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The  
209 report must include statistics and information relating to this  
210 section and s. 489.5161 which detail:

211 (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as  
212 veterans.

213 (b) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
214 was approved.

215 (c) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
216 was denied, including the reasons for denial.

217 (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans.

218 (e) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's  
219 ability to meet the needs of veterans which would effectively  
220 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from  
221 military service and seeking a license regulated by the  
222 department pursuant to part I of chapter 489.

223 Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
224 489.511, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

225 489.511 Certification; application; examinations;  
226 endorsement.-

227 (1)

228 (b) Any person desiring to be certified as a contractor  
229 shall apply to the department in writing and must meet the  
230 following criteria:

231 1. Be of good moral character;

232 2. Pass the certification examination, achieving a passing

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233 grade as established by board rule; and

234 3. Meet eligibility requirements according to one of the  
235 following criteria:

236 a. Has, within the 6 years immediately preceding the filing  
237 of the application, at least 3 years of ~~years'~~ proven management  
238 experience in the trade or education equivalent thereto, or a  
239 combination thereof, but not more than one-half of such  
240 experience may be educational equivalent;

241 b. Has, within the 8 years immediately preceding the filing  
242 of the application, at least 4 years of ~~years'~~ experience as a  
243 supervisor or contractor in the trade for which he or she is  
244 making application, or at least 4 years of experience as a  
245 supervisor in electrical or alarm system work with the United  
246 States Armed Forces;

247 c. Has, within the 12 years immediately preceding the  
248 filing of the application, at least 6 years of comprehensive  
249 training, technical education, or supervisory experience  
250 associated with an electrical or alarm system contracting  
251 business, or at least 6 years of technical experience,   
252 education, or training in electrical or alarm system work with  
253 the United States Armed Forces or a governmental entity;

254 d. Has, within the 12 years immediately preceding the  
255 filing of the application, been licensed for 3 years as a  
256 professional engineer who is qualified by education, training,  
257 or experience to practice electrical engineering; or

258 e. Has any combination of qualifications under sub-  
259 subparagraphs a.-c. totaling 6 years of experience.

260 Section 6. Section 489.5161, Florida Statutes, is created  
261 to read:

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262       489.5161 Credit for relevant military training and  
263 education.-

264       (1) The department shall provide a method by which  
265 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The  
266 method must include a veteran-specific application and provide,  
267 to the fullest extent possible, credit toward the requirements  
268 for licensure for military experience, training, and education  
269 received and completed during service in the United States Armed  
270 Forces if the military experience, training, or education is  
271 substantially similar to the experience, training, or education  
272 required for licensure. The board may adopt rules pursuant to s.  
273 120.536(1) and s. 120.54 to implement this subsection.

274       (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning  
275 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the department, in  
276 conjunction with the board, is directed to prepare and submit a  
277 report titled "Construction and Electrical Contracting Veteran  
278 Applicant Statistics" to the Governor, the President of the  
279 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The  
280 report shall include statistics and information relating to this  
281 section and s. 489.1131 which detail:

282       (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as  
283 veterans.

284       (b) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
285 was approved.

286       (c) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
287 was denied, including data on the reasons for denial.

288       (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans.

289       (e) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's  
290 ability to meet the needs of veterans which would effectively

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291 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from  
292 military service and seeking a license regulated by the  
293 department pursuant to part II of chapter 489.

294 Section 7. Section 493.61035, Florida Statutes, is created  
295 to read:

296 493.61035 Credit for relevant military training and  
297 education.—

298 (1) The department shall provide a method by which  
299 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The  
300 method must include:

301 (a) To the fullest extent possible, credit toward the  
302 requirements for licensure for military training and education  
303 received and completed during service in the United States Armed  
304 Forces if the military training or education is substantially  
305 similar to the training or education required for licensure.

306 (b) Identification of overlaps and gaps between the  
307 requirements for licensure and the military training or  
308 education received and completed by the veteran, and subsequent  
309 notification to the veteran of the overlaps and gaps.

310 (c) Assistance in identifying programs that offer training  
311 and education needed to meet the requirements for licensure.

312 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning  
313 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the department is  
314 directed to prepare and submit a report to the Governor, the  
315 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
316 Representatives. In addition to any other information that the  
317 Legislature may require, the report must include statistics and  
318 relevant information which detail:

319 (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as

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320 veterans.

321 (b) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
322 was approved.

323 (c) The number of veterans whose application for a license  
324 was denied, including the reasons for denial.

325 (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans.

326 (e) The department's efforts to assist veterans in  
327 identifying programs that offer training and education needed to  
328 meet the requirements for licensure.

329 (f) The department's identification of the most common  
330 overlaps and gaps between the requirements for licensure and the  
331 military training and education received and completed by the  
332 veterans.

333 (g) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's  
334 ability to meet the needs of veterans which would effectively  
335 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from  
336 military service and seeking a license for a profession or  
337 occupation regulated by the department pursuant to chapter 493.

338 Section 8. (1) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor  
339 Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs shall jointly  
340 conduct a pilot program to provide onsite commercial motor  
341 vehicle driver license testing opportunities to qualified  
342 members of the Florida National Guard pursuant to the Department  
343 of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles commercial motor vehicle  
344 driver license skills test waiver under s. 322.12, Florida  
345 Statutes. Testing must be held at a Florida National Guard  
346 Armory, a Florida United States Armed Forces Reserve Center, or  
347 the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. The pilot program shall  
348 be accomplished using existing funds appropriated to each

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349 department.

350 (2) By June 30, 2017, the Department of Highway Safety and  
351 Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs shall  
352 jointly submit a report on the results of the pilot program to  
353 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of  
354 Representatives.

355 (3) This section is repealed October 1, 2017, and shall not  
356 be codified in the Florida Statutes.

357 Section 9. Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task  
358 Force.—The Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force, a  
359 task force as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes, is created  
360 within the Department of State. The task force is created for  
361 the express purpose of studying issues involving the development  
362 and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent  
363 uniformed services voters who are overseas to electronically  
364 submit voted ballots.

365 (1) The task force is composed of 11 members, as follows:

366 (a) The Secretary of State or his or her designee, who  
367 shall serve as chair of the task force.

368 (b) The Adjutant General or his or her designee.

369 (c) The executive director of the Agency for State  
370 Technology or his or her designee.

371 (d) One member of the Senate appointed by the President of  
372 the Senate.

373 (e) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by  
374 the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

375 (f) Three supervisors of elections appointed by the Florida  
376 State Association of Supervisors of Elections.

377 (g) Three individuals appointed by the Secretary of State,

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378 with relevant expertise in computers, the Internet, or other  
379 associated technologies.

380 (2) Members of the task force shall serve without  
381 compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and  
382 travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

383 (3) The task force, at a minimum, shall study and report on  
384 the following issues:

385 (a) Any factor that limits the ability of absent uniformed  
386 services voters who are overseas to request, receive, and return  
387 absentee ballots within the current statutory time period for  
388 casting absentee ballots.

389 (b) The costs associated with the development and  
390 implementation of an online voting system.

391 (c) The feasibility of absent uniformed services voters who  
392 are overseas using an online voting system to electronically  
393 submit a voted ballot.

394 (d) The security of electronically submitting a voted  
395 ballot through an online voting system.

396 (e) Procedures adopted by other states to facilitate  
397 greater electoral participation among absent uniformed services  
398 voters who are overseas.

399 (4) The Secretary of State shall submit a report to the  
400 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
401 House of Representatives by July 1, 2017, containing the task  
402 force's recommendation concerning whether the state should  
403 pursue the development and implementation of an online voting  
404 system that allows absent uniformed services voters who are  
405 overseas to electronically submit voted ballots. If the task  
406 force favorably recommends an online voting system, the report

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407 must include recommended steps for developing and implementing  
408 such a system. Upon submission of the report, the task force  
409 shall expire.

410 (5) The Division of Elections of the Department of State  
411 shall provide support staff for the task force. The Agency for  
412 State Technology shall assist the task force upon request.

413 Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.