

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.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Rules

BILL: SB 666

INTRODUCER: Senator Legg

SUBJECT: Voter Identification

DATE: January 19, 2016

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|----------------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1. | <u>Carlton</u> | <u>Roberts</u> | <u>EE</u> | Favorable |
| 2. | <u>Sanders</u> | <u>Ryon</u> | <u>MS</u> | Favorable |
| 3. | <u>Carlton</u> | <u>Phelps</u> | <u>RC</u> | Favorable |

I. Summary:

SB 666 allows two new forms of identification to be used for the purposes of voter registration and identification at the polls. Specifically, it allows a voter to use his or her Florida concealed weapon or firearm license and a Veteran Health Identification Card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

II. Present Situation:

A voter registration applicant who has never previously voted in Florida and who has not been issued a current and valid Florida driver license, Florida ID card, or social security card is allowed to register to vote by mail.¹ However, he or she is required to provide a copy of a current and valid identification, or indicate that he or she is exempt. The following forms of identification are allowed in support of their applications if they contain the name and photograph of the applicant and have not expired:

- U.S. Passport;
- Debit or credit card;
- Military ID;
- Student ID;
- Retirement center ID;
- Neighborhood association ID; and
- Public assistance ID.²

¹ Section 97.0535(1), F.S.

² Section 97.0535(3)(a), F.S.

Additionally, the following forms of identification are allowed in support of their applications if they contain the name and current residence address of the applicant:

- Utility bill;
- Bank statement;
- Government check;
- Paycheck; or
- Other government document (excluding voter identification card).³

Currently, s. 101.043, F.S. requires a voter to produce identification at the polls. That section allows the following forms of identification to satisfy that requirement:

- Florida driver license;
- Florida identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles;
- U.S. Passport;
- Debit or credit card;
- Military ID;
- Student ID;
- Retirement center ID;
- Neighborhood association ID; and
- Public assistance ID.⁴

License to Carry Concealed Weapon or Firearm

Recipients of a Florida concealed weapon or firearm license must be 21 years of age or older; demonstrate competency with a firearm; and, unless currently serving overseas in the United States Armed Forces, currently reside in the United States as a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident alien.⁵ Candidates for a concealed weapon or firearm license may be ineligible dependent on the provisions listed in s. 790.06, F.S.⁶ The license is required to bear a color photograph of the licensee.⁷

Veteran Health Identification Card

The Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC) is issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) to veterans who are enrolled in the USDVA health care system for identification and check-in at USDVA appointments.⁸ In order to receive a VHIC, the veteran must apply for enrollment in the USDVA health care system and provide a primary and

³ Section 97.0535(3)(b), F.S.

⁴ Section 101.043(1), F.S.

⁵ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *Concealed Weapon License: Eligibility Requirements*, available at <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Licensing/Concealed-Weapon-License/Eligibility-Requirements> (last visited Dec. 18, 2015).

⁶ See section 790.06, F.S.

⁷ Section 790.06(1), F.S.

⁸ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *Health Benefits*, available at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic/index.asp> (last visited Dec. 18, 2015).

secondary form of identification.⁹ Once the veteran's enrollment is verified, he or she must have their picture taken at the local USDVA medical center for inclusion on the VHIC.¹⁰

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 666 allows the narrow class of voter registration applicants addressed in s. 97.0535, F.S. to provide a Veteran Health Identification Card issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or Florida license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm as a form of identification in support of their voter registration application. The bill also authorizes those two forms of identification to be used as identification at the polls as required by s. 101.043, F.S. Finally, the bill makes conforming changes to the absentee ballot and special absentee ballot instructions.

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:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

⁹ Id.

¹⁰ *Supra* note 8

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 97.0535, 101.043, 101.68, and 101.6923.

IX. Additional Information:

A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

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

None.

B. **Amendments:**

None.

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