

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to the State University Free Seat  
 3           Program; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.; creating the State  
 4           University Free Seat Program; providing a purpose;  
 5           providing a limitation on fee waivers under the  
 6           program; providing an exemption from tuition and fees  
 7           for one online course at a state university for  
 8           certain resident students; prohibiting a state  
 9           university from charging such students more than a  
 10          specified percentage of the tuition rate and the  
 11          tuition differential under certain circumstances;  
 12          providing a limitation on the application of such  
 13          tuition discount; requiring each state university to  
 14          report certain information regarding waivers under the  
 15          program to the Board of Governors annually; requiring  
 16          the board to adopt regulations; providing an effective  
 17          date.

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

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 21           Section 1. Subsection (18) is added to section 1009.26,  
 22 Florida Statutes, to read:

23           1009.26 Fee waivers.—

24           (18) The State University Free Seat Program is created to  
 25 encourage veterans, active duty members of the United States

26 Armed Forces, active drilling members of the Florida National  
27 Guard, and nontraditional students to enroll in an online  
28 baccalaureate degree program at a state university. Fee waivers  
29 granted pursuant to this subsection may not exceed 1,000  
30 students systemwide each academic year.

31 (a) A state university shall waive the tuition and fees  
32 for one online course for a student who is a resident for  
33 tuition purposes under s. 1009.21, has not previously earned a  
34 bachelor's degree, and is enrolled in an online baccalaureate  
35 degree program, provided the student meets one of the following  
36 eligibility requirements:

37 1. Is a veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14);

38 2. Is an active duty member of the United States Armed  
39 Forces;

40 3. Is an active drilling member of the Florida National  
41 Guard; or

42 4. Has not been enrolled in a postsecondary institution  
43 for more than 5 years.

44 (b) For all other courses in the program, a state  
45 university may not charge a student described in paragraph (a)  
46 more than 75 percent of the tuition rate as specified in s.  
47 1009.24(4) and 75 percent of the tuition differential pursuant  
48 to s. 1009.24(16), if the student remains enrolled at least  
49 part-time in the program during each academic year.

50        (c) A student who qualifies for the tuition discount under  
51 paragraph (b) is eligible to receive the discount for up to 110  
52 percent of the number of required credit hours of the degree  
53 program for which the student is enrolled.

54        (d) Each state university shall report to the Board of  
55 Governors the number and value of all fee waivers granted  
56 annually under this subsection.

57        (e) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations to  
58 administer this subsection.

59        Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.