1	A bill to be entitled
2	An act relating to death benefits for active duty
3	servicemembers; amending s. 295.061, F.S.; revising
4	the amount and conditions of payment of death
5	benefits; requiring payment to be made to the
6	beneficiary through the process set out by the
7	Department of Military Affairs; removing provisions
8	relating to payment when a beneficiary is not
9	designated; requiring proof of residency or duty post
10	to be provided to the department; requiring the
11	department to request the Chief Financial Officer to
12	draw a warrant for payment of benefits from the
13	General Revenue Fund; requiring the Department of
14	Military Affairs and the Department of Financial
15	Services to adopt certain rules and procedures;
16	removing provisions relating to an appropriation to
17	the Department of Financial Services for payment of
18	death benefits; providing an effective date.
19	
20	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
21	
22	Section 1. Section 295.061, Florida Statutes, is amended
23	to read:
24	295.061 Active duty servicemembers; death benefits
25	(1) As used in this section, the term:
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26 (a) "Active duty" has the same meaning as provided in s. 27 250.01.

(b) "United States Armed Forces" means the United States
Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast
Guard.

(2) The sum of \$75,000 must be paid by the state if a member of the United States Armed Forces, while on active duty and engaged in the performance of his or her official duties, is killed or <u>sustains</u> receives a bodily injury that results in the loss of the member's life, provided that such killing is not the result of suicide and that such bodily injury is not intentionally self-inflicted.

38 (3) The sum of \$25,000 must be paid by the state if a 39 member of the United States Armed Forces, while on active duty, 40 is killed other than as specified in subsection (2), provided 41 that the killing is not the result of suicide and that such 42 bodily injury is not intentionally self-inflicted.

43 (3) (4) Payment of benefits made under subsection (2) or subsection (3) must be made paid to the beneficiary designated 44 45 by such member through the process set out by in writing and 46 delivered to the Department of Military Affairs during the 47 member's lifetime. If no such designation is made, then the 48 payments must be paid to the member's surviving child or 49 children and to his or her surviving spouse in equal portions, or if there is no surviving child or spouse, must be made to the 50

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51 member's parent or parents. If a beneficiary is not designated 52 and there is no surviving child, spouse, or parent, then the sum 53 must be paid to the member's estate. 54 (4) (4) (5) To qualify for the benefits provided in this 55 section, the deceased military member must have been a resident of this state, or his or her duty post must have been within 56 57 this state, at the time of death. Proof of residency or duty post must be provided to the Department of Military Affairs in 58 59 the manner prescribed by the department. 60 (5) (6) Any benefits provided pursuant to this section are 61 in addition to any other benefits provided under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program or any other 62 federal program. Benefits granted pursuant to this section are 63 exempt from the claims and demands of creditors of such member. 64 (6) (7) Benefits provided under subsection (2) or 65 66 subsection (3) shall be paid from the General Revenue Fund. The 67 department shall request the Chief Financial Officer to draw a 68 warrant from the General Revenue Fund for the payment of the 69 benefit in the amount specified in this section. 70 (7) The Department of Military Affairs and the Department of Financial Services shall adopt rules and procedures as 71 appropriate and necessary to implement subsections (1)-(6) 72 73 Beginning in the 2019-2020 fiscal year and continuing each 74 fiscal year thereafter, a sum sufficient to pay such benefits is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of 75 Page 3 of 5

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76 Financial Services for the purposes of paying such benefits. 77 If an active duty member is killed as specified in (8)(a) 78 subsection (2) or subsection (3), the state must waive certain 79 educational expenses that the child or the spouse of the 80 deceased member incurs while obtaining a career certificate, an undergraduate education, or a postgraduate education. The amount 81 82 waived by the state must be in an amount equal to the cost of 83 tuition and matriculation and registration fees for a total of 84 120 credit hours. The child or the spouse may attend a state career center, a Florida College System institution, or a state 85 86 university on either a full-time or part-time basis. The benefits provided to a child under this subsection must continue 87 88 until the child's 25th birthday. The benefits provided to a 89 spouse under this subsection must commence within 5 years after the death occurs and may continue until the 10th anniversary of 90 91 that death. Upon failure of any child or spouse who receives a 92 (b) 93 waiver in accordance with this subsection to comply with the 94 ordinary and minimum requirements regarding discipline and 95 scholarship of the institution attended, such benefits to the 96 child or the spouse must be withdrawn and no further moneys may 97 be expended for the child's or spouse's benefits so long as such 98 failure or delinguency continues.

99 (c) Only a student in good standing in his or her100 respective institution may receive the benefits provided in this

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101	subsection.
102	(d) A child or spouse who is receiving benefits under this
103	subsection shall be enrolled according to the customary rules
104	and requirements of the institution attended.
105	(e) A child or spouse of a member may receive benefits
106	under either this subsection or s. 295.01.
107	(f) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and
108	procedures, and the Board of Governors shall adopt regulations
109	and procedures, as are appropriate and necessary to implement
110	this subsection.
111	Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.

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