By Senator Garcia

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to grants for victims of political
discrimination; creating s. 17.691, F.S.; defining the
term “qualified person”; requiring that a specified
trust fund be used to provide grants to qualified
persons to pay for specified expenses; providing
construction; requiring the Department of Financial
Services to distribute grants in a specified manner;
providing the maximum amount that a qualified person
may receive; requiring the department to adopt rules;
authorizing emergency rulemaking; providing a
contingent effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 17.691, Florida Statutes, is created to
read:

17.691 Authorized use of Defending Freedom Fighters Trust
Fund.—
(1) For purposes of this section, the term “qualified
person” means a person who:
(a) Meets the presidential eligibility requirements of s.
1, Art. II of the United States Constitution.
(b) Is a legal resident of the state as defined in s.
1009.21(1) or has a valid driver license issued under s. 322.18.
(c) Complies with chapter 106 and federal election law.
(2) Funds from the Defending Freedom Fighters Trust Fund
created under s. 17.69 must be used to provide grants to
qualified persons subject to political discrimination to pay for
legal fees incurred as a result of criminal charges brought by a U.S. public entity as defined in 31 U.S.C. s. 802.243. For purposes of this subsection, the department has the sole authority to determine if a person has been subject to political discrimination.

(3) The department shall distribute grants to a qualified person in an efficient manner, prioritizing funding based on the severity of criminal charges and the causal connection between the charges and the political affiliation of the qualified person.

(4) Subject to the availability of funds, a qualified person may receive up to $5 million under this section.

(5) The department shall adopt rules to administer this section.

Section 2. The Department of Revenue is authorized, and all conditions are deemed met, to adopt emergency rules pursuant to s. 120.54(4), Florida Statutes, for the purpose of implementing this act.

Section 3. This act shall take effect on the same date that SB ____ or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension thereof and becomes a law.