

1                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to business development incentives for  
 3           veterans and military spouses; creating s. 295.189,  
 4           F.S.; providing a short title; providing legislative  
 5           findings and intent; providing definitions; requiring  
 6           the Department of State to waive specified fees for  
 7           certain businesses; providing eligibility and  
 8           registration requirements for the fee waivers;  
 9           providing applicability; providing for rulemaking and  
 10          interagency cooperation; providing reporting  
 11          requirements; providing an effective date.

12  
 13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 15           **Section 1. Section 295.189, Florida Statutes, is created**  
 16 **to read:**

17           295.189 Business development incentives for veterans and  
 18 military spouses.-

19           (1) SHORT TITLE.-This act may be cited as the "Florida  
 20 Veterans and Military Spouse Business Development Act."

21           (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.-

22           (a) The Legislature finds that veterans and military  
 23 spouses contribute significantly to this state's economy through  
 24 their skills, expertise, and entrepreneurial efforts.

25           (b) The Legislature recognizes the challenges of frequent

26 relocations and economic instability faced by many military  
 27 spouses.

28 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that this act  
 29 attracts and supports veteran-owned and military spouse-owned  
 30 businesses by providing incentives.

31 (3) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of this section, the  
 32 term:

33 (a) "Military spouse" means a spouse of:

- 34 1. An active duty member of the United States Armed
- 35 Forces; or
- 36 2. A veteran.

37 (b) "Veteran" has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14).

38 (c) "Veteran-owned or military spouse-owned business"  
 39 means a business entity:

- 40 1. That employs 200 or fewer permanent full-time
- 41 employees;
- 42 2. That, together with its affiliates, has a net worth of
- 43 \$5 million or less or, if a sole proprietorship, has a net worth
- 44 of \$5 million or less including personal and business
- 45 investments;
- 46 3. That is organized to engage in commercial transactions;
- 47 4. That is domiciled in this state;
- 48 5. That is at least 51 percent owned and operated by one
- 49 or more veterans or military spouses who are residents of this
- 50 state;

51 6. The management and daily business operations of which  
52 are controlled by one or more veterans or military spouses; and

53 7. That has a professional license, if required by the  
54 industry, in the name of a veteran or military spouse who owns  
55 the business entity.

56 (4) FEE WAIVER.—

57 (a) The Department of State shall waive all fees for:

58 1. A new business established by a veteran or military  
59 spouse.

60 2. An existing veteran-owned or military spouse-owned  
61 business that relocates to this state.

62 (b) The Department of State shall establish registration  
63 requirements for such fee waivers, which must include:

64 1. For veterans, a DD Form 214 or another acceptable form  
65 of identification as specified by the United States Department  
66 of Veterans' Affairs; or

67 2. For military spouses, verification of a military spouse  
68 relationship and that the other spouse is on active duty or a  
69 veteran.

70 (c) The fee waivers shall apply to veteran-owned or  
71 military spouse-owned businesses established or certified  
72 between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2030.

73 (5) ADMINISTRATION.—The Department of Veterans' Affairs  
74 and the Department of State shall:

75 (a) Develop rules for administering this section.

76        (b) Ensure interagency cooperation for seamless  
77 implementation of this section.

78        (6) ANNUAL REPORTING.—Beginning December 31, 2025, and  
79 each December 31 thereafter, the Department of Veterans' Affairs  
80 shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the  
81 Legislature that includes:

82            (a) The number of veteran-owned or military spouse-owned  
83 businesses that were established in this state or that relocated  
84 to this state.

85            (b) Economic metrics such as job creation and tax revenue  
86 impact from veteran-owned or military spouse-owned businesses.

87            (c) Demographic data for the participating veterans and  
88 military spouses.

89        **Section 2.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.