

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to military affairs; amending s.  
3           115.01, F.S.; revising the authorization to be granted  
4           a leave of absence for military service to include the  
5           Coast Guard; removing the condition that such service  
6           be during war between the United States and a foreign  
7           government; amending s. 115.07, F.S.; clarifying a  
8           provision relating to leaves of absence for all  
9           officers and employees of the state and the counties,  
10          municipalities, and political subdivisions of the  
11          state for reserve or guard training; amending s.  
12          115.08, F.S.; revising the definition of the term  
13          "active military service"; amending s. 115.09, F.S.;  
14          specifying that an authorization for a leave of  
15          absence for public officials to perform active  
16          military service for a specified timeframe is based on  
17          a single order; amending s. 115.14, F.S.; specifying  
18          that an authorization for a leave of absence for all  
19          employees of the state and the counties,  
20          municipalities, and political subdivisions of the  
21          state to perform active military service for a  
22          specified timeframe is based on a single order;  
23          amending s. 121.055, F.S.; revising military positions  
24          required to participate in the Senior Management  
25          Service Class of the Florida Retirement System;

26 | amending s. 250.10, F.S.; removing a requirement that  
27 | the Adjutant General administer youth About Face  
28 | Programs and adult Forward March programs; removing  
29 | provisions governing the programs; amending s.  
30 | 250.116, F.S.; revising eligibility for the Soldiers  
31 | and Airmen Assistance Program to include traditional  
32 | drilling guardsmen on state active duty or on Title 32  
33 | United States Code duty and their eligible  
34 | beneficiaries demonstrating valid financial need;  
35 | defining the term "beneficiary"; requiring requests  
36 | for assistance to be reviewed, processed, and approved  
37 | by the Florida National Guard Foundation's board of  
38 | directors; requiring requests for assistance to be  
39 | reviewed and evaluated based on specified criteria;  
40 | requiring an annual external audit of the program;  
41 | requiring the board to annually review the bylaws that  
42 | govern the program; requiring the board to provide a  
43 | report to the Department of Military Affairs to be  
44 | approved by the Adjutant General; reenacting s.  
45 | 115.06, F.S., relating to reassumption of duties for  
46 | officers returning from the service of the United  
47 | States, to incorporate the amendment made to s.  
48 | 115.01, F.S., in a reference thereto; providing an  
49 | effective date.  
50 |

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

52  
53 **Section 1. Section 115.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to**  
54 **read:**

55 115.01 Leave of absence for military service.—Any county  
56 or state official of the state, subject to the provisions and  
57 conditions hereinafter set forth, may be granted leave of  
58 absence from his or her office, to serve in the volunteer forces  
59 of the United States, or in the National Guard of any state, or  
60 in the regular Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard,  
61 or Space Force of the United States, when the same shall be  
62 called into active service of the United States ~~during war~~  
63 ~~between the United States and a foreign government.~~

64 **Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 115.07, Florida**  
65 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

66 115.07 Officers and employees' leaves of absence for  
67 reserve or guard training.—

68 (1) All officers or employees of the state, of the several  
69 counties of the state, and of the municipalities or political  
70 subdivisions of the state who are commissioned reserve officers  
71 or reserve enlisted personnel in the United States military or  
72 naval service or members of the National Guard are entitled to  
73 leaves of absence from their respective duties, without loss of  
74 vacation leave, pay, time, or efficiency rating, on all days  
75 during which they are engaged in training ordered under the

76 provisions of the United States military or naval training  
 77 regulations or applicable general law for such personnel when  
 78 assigned to active or inactive duty.

79 **Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 115.08, Florida**  
 80 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

81 115.08 Definitions.—

82 (1) The term "active military service" as used in this  
 83 chapter means ~~shall signify~~ active duty ~~in the Florida defense~~  
 84 ~~force or federal service in training or on active duty~~ with any  
 85 branch of the Armed Forces or Reservists of the Armed Forces,  
 86 the Florida National Guard, the Coast Guard of the United  
 87 States, and service of all officers of the United States Public  
 88 Health Service detailed by proper authority for duty with the  
 89 Armed Forces, and includes ~~shall include~~ the period during which  
 90 a person in military service is absent from duty on account of  
 91 sickness, wounds, leave, or other lawful cause.

92 **Section 4. Section 115.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to**  
 93 **read:**

94 115.09 Leave to public officials for military service.—All  
 95 officials of the state, the several counties of the state, and  
 96 the municipalities or political subdivisions of the state,  
 97 including district school and Florida ~~community~~ College System  
 98 officers, which officials are also servicemembers in the  
 99 National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the  
 100 United States, must be granted leave of absence from their

101 respective offices and duties to perform active military  
102 service, with the first 30 days of any such leave of absence to  
103 be with full pay for active federal military service that is  
104 equal to or greater than 90 consecutive days on a single order.

105 **Section 5. Section 115.14, Florida Statutes, is amended to**  
106 **read:**

107 115.14 Employees.—All employees of the state, the several  
108 counties of the state, and the municipalities or political  
109 subdivisions of the state must be granted leave of absence under  
110 the terms of this law; upon such leave of absence being granted,  
111 such employee must enjoy the same rights and privileges as are  
112 granted to officials under this law, including, without  
113 limitation, receiving full pay for the first 30 days for federal  
114 military service that is equal to or greater than 90 consecutive  
115 days on a single order. Notwithstanding s. 115.09, the employing  
116 authority may supplement the military pay of its officials and  
117 employees who are reservists called to active military service  
118 after the first 30 days in an amount necessary to bring their  
119 total salary, inclusive of their base military pay, to the level  
120 earned at the time they were called to active military duty. The  
121 employing authority shall continue to provide all health  
122 insurance and other existing benefits to such officials and  
123 employees as required by the Uniformed Services Employment and  
124 Reemployment Rights Act, chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.

125 **Section 6. Paragraph (g) of subsection (1) of section**

126 **121.055, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

127       121.055 Senior Management Service Class.—There is hereby  
 128 established a separate class of membership within the Florida  
 129 Retirement System to be known as the "Senior Management Service  
 130 Class," which shall become effective February 1, 1987.

131       (1)

132       (g) Effective July 1, 1996, participation in the Senior  
 133 Management Service Class shall be compulsory for any member of  
 134 the Florida Retirement System employed with the Department of  
 135 Military Affairs in the uniformed positions of the Adjutant  
 136 General, Assistant Adjutant General-Army, Assistant Adjutant  
 137 General-Air, State Quartermaster, ~~Director of Human Resources,~~  
 138 ~~Director of Legislative Affairs, Inspector General, Executive~~  
 139 ~~Officer,~~ and additional directors as designated by the agency  
 140 head, not to exceed two Special Projects Officers of the Florida  
 141 National Guard ~~a total of 10 positions~~. In lieu of participation  
 142 in the Senior Management Service Class, such members may  
 143 participate in the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity  
 144 Program as established in subsection (6).

145       **Section 7. Paragraph (m) of subsection (2) of section**  
 146 **250.10, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

147       250.10 Appointment and duties of the Adjutant General.—

148       (2) The Adjutant General shall:

149       ~~(m) Subject to annual appropriations, administer youth~~  
 150 ~~About Face programs and adult Forward March programs at sites to~~

151 ~~be selected by the Adjutant General. Both programs must provide~~  
152 ~~schoolwork assistance, focusing on the skills needed to master~~  
153 ~~basic high school competencies and functional life skills,~~  
154 ~~including teaching students to work effectively in groups,~~  
155 ~~providing basic instruction in computer skills; teaching basic~~  
156 ~~problem-solving, decisionmaking, and reasoning skills; teaching~~  
157 ~~how the business world and free enterprise work through computer~~  
158 ~~simulations; and teaching home finance and budgeting and other~~  
159 ~~daily living skills.~~

160 ~~1. About Face is a summer and year-round after-school~~  
161 ~~life-preparation program for economically disadvantaged and at-~~  
162 ~~risk youths from 13 through 17 years of age. The program must~~  
163 ~~provide training in academic study skills, and the basic skills~~  
164 ~~that businesses require for employment consideration.~~

165 ~~2. Forward March is a job-readiness program for~~  
166 ~~economically disadvantaged participants who are directed to~~  
167 ~~Forward March by the local workforce development boards. The~~  
168 ~~Forward March program shall provide training on topics that~~  
169 ~~directly relate to the skills required for real-world success.~~  
170 ~~The program shall emphasize functional life skills, computer~~  
171 ~~literacy, interpersonal relationships, critical-thinking skills,~~  
172 ~~business skills, preemployment and work maturity skills, job-~~  
173 ~~search skills, exploring careers activities, how to be a~~  
174 ~~successful and effective employee, and some job-specific skills.~~  
175 ~~The program also shall provide extensive opportunities for~~

176 ~~participants to practice generic job skills in a supervised work~~  
177 ~~setting. Upon completion of the program, Forward March shall~~  
178 ~~return participants to the local workforce development boards~~  
179 ~~for placement in a job placement pool.~~

180 **Section 8. Subsections (4), (5), and (6) of section**  
181 **250.116, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (7) is**  
182 **added to that section, to read:**

183 250.116 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Program.—

184 (4) ELIGIBILITY.—Persons eligible for assistance from the  
185 program include:

186 (a) Servicemembers who are members of the Florida National  
187 Guard who are:

188 1. traditional drilling guardsmen on state active duty or  
189 on Title 32 United States Code duty, who otherwise do not  
190 qualify for the assistance programs available to servicemembers  
191 serving under Title 10 United States Code, and who demonstrate  
192 valid financial need, and their eligible beneficiaries, are  
193 authorized to apply for and receive financial assistance from  
194 the program, as administered by the Florida National Guard  
195 Foundation's board of directors and its governing bylaws,  
196 contingent upon the availability of funds ~~serving in the Global~~  
197 ~~War on Terrorism or Overseas Contingency Operation or who~~  
198 ~~request assistance within 120 days after the termination of~~  
199 ~~orders for such service and return to their home of record.~~

200 ~~2. Deployed by the Federal Government and participating in~~

201 ~~state operations for homeland defense or request assistance~~  
202 ~~within 120 days after the termination of orders for such service~~  
203 ~~and return to their home of record.~~

204 (b)1. As used in this subsection, the term "beneficiary"  
205 means the current spouse, dependent children, or other  
206 designated beneficiaries as determined by the Adjutant General  
207 ~~Beneficiaries of an eligible servicemember designated on United~~  
208 ~~States Department of Defense Form 93.~~

209 ~~2. Individuals demonstrating a financial need for~~  
210 ~~authorized assistance who are dependents or family members of an~~  
211 ~~eligible servicemember.~~

212 (5) REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE; REVIEW; AWARDS.—

213 (a) A request for assistance must ~~shall~~ be reviewed, and  
214 processed, and approved by the Florida National Guard  
215 Foundation's board of directors at the local level by an  
216 ~~official designated by the Adjutant General. During the initial~~  
217 ~~review and processing of the request, the Department of Military~~  
218 ~~Affairs may accept assistance from the direct-support~~  
219 ~~organization. Final review and approval of requests for~~  
220 ~~assistance shall be made by the Department of Military Affairs.~~

221 (b) Requests for assistance must ~~shall~~ be reviewed and  
222 evaluated based on the following criteria:

223 1. The impact of a servicemember's financial situation  
224 ~~absence~~ and inability to provide quality of life and other  
225 qualifying life-impacting ~~assist in home and vehicle repairs or~~

226 ~~meet other~~ family needs;  
 227       2. ~~The economic impact of deployment;~~  
 228       3. ~~The overall financial situation of the applicant;~~  
 229       2.4. The assistance authorized under the program; and  
 230       3.5. Any other consideration dictated in the bylaws of the  
 231 Florida National Guard Foundation ~~Other relevant information.~~

232       (6) ~~QUARTERLY~~ FINANCIAL REVIEW.—The financial committee of  
 233 the board of directors of the direct-support organization shall  
 234 review financial transactions of the program each quarter. The  
 235 board of directors must also ensure an annual external audit is  
 236 completed and published on the publicly available website of the  
 237 direct-support organization. This audit must ~~review shall~~ be  
 238 provided to the Department of Military Affairs in order to  
 239 determine whether the direct-support organization is being  
 240 operated in a manner that is consistent with the purposes of the  
 241 Soldiers and Airmen Assistance Fund, and in the best interests  
 242 of the department. The financial committee may request the  
 243 Office of Inspector General to conduct additional reviews.

244       (7) ANNUAL BYLAW REVIEW.—The Florida National Guard  
 245 Foundation's board of directors shall annually review the bylaws  
 246 that govern the program. This review shall be provided in a  
 247 report to the Department of Military Affairs and subject to  
 248 approval by the Adjutant General.

249       **Section 9. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**  
 250 **made by this act to section 115.01, Florida Statutes, in a**

251 **reference thereto, section 115.06, Florida Statutes, is**  
252 **reenacted to read:**

253       115.06 Reassumption of duties.—Upon being mustered out of  
254 the service of the United States, such officer granted leave  
255 under s. 115.01 shall immediately enter into the duties of his  
256 or her office for the remainder of the term for which he or she  
257 was elected.

258       **Section 10.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.