



Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee

Meeting Packet

**Tuesday, January 19, 2016
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
12 HOB**



The Florida House of Representatives

Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee

Steve Crisafulli
Speaker

Jimmie T. Smith
Chair

Tuesday, January 19, 2016
Meeting Agenda
Room 12, House Office Building
04:00 p.m. – 06:00 p.m.

- I. Call to Order**

- II. Roll Call**

- III. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

- IV. Consideration of the Following Bill(s):**

HB 429 Military and Veterans Affairs by Steube

HB 505 Voter Identification by Burgess, Cortes, B., Stone


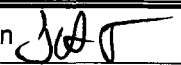
- V. Presentation:**

**Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability
(OPPAGA) – A presentation on “Veterans’ Credentialing Programs”**

- VI. Adjournment**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 429 Military and Veterans Affairs
SPONSOR(S): Steube
TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee		Renner 	Thompson 
2) Appropriations Committee			
3) Local & Federal Affairs Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill addresses overseas absentee voting for military personnel, support for student veterans at state colleges and universities, and outreach to veterans regarding benefits available as a result of military service. Specifically the bill:

- Creates the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force within the Department of State to study issues involving the development and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent uniformed services voters who are overseas to electronically submit voted ballots.
- Provides legislative intent regarding academic credit for military training and coursework and collaboration between the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors on student veteran issues.
- Requires the application form for an original, renewal, or replacement driver license or identification card to include the option for veterans to request information on local benefits and services, in addition to state, and federal benefits and services, available as a result of military service either through the United States Postal Service or by email.

The bill has an insignificant negative fiscal impact on the Department of State for the reimbursement of per diem and travel expenses for the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force. The bill may also have an insignificant negative fiscal impact on the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs. The fiscal impact to the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education is indeterminate.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2016.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Creation of the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force

Present Situation

Military Voters Overseas

Florida currently does not provide for the return of voted absentee ballots through an online system or by other Internet-related or electronic means, except for overseas voters who may return their ballots via secure facsimile.¹ Florida law, however, does provide a special extension of time — 10 extra days — for overseas voters to return voted ballots in general elections and presidential preference primaries, provided the ballot is sent by Election Day.² Additionally, the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) serves as an emergency back-up ballot for overseas voters who have requested a regular absentee ballot but didn't receive it.³

Further expediting the voting process is the fact that, in addition to mailing a ballot, county election supervisors may e-mail, fax, or provide blank ballots online to voters at their request — an important time-saving measure for overseas electors who submit ballot requests close to an election or who otherwise do not timely receive their ballot.⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates the Overseas Military Voting Assistance Task Force (Task Force) to study the development and implementation of an online voting system that would allow absent uniformed services voters who are overseas to submit a voted absentee ballot electronically.

The Task Force must be composed of 20 members as follows:

- The Secretary of State or his or her designee, who must serve as chair.
- The Adjutant General or his or her designee.
- The executive director of the FDVA or his or her designee.
- The executive director of the Agency for State Technology or his or her designee.
- One member of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate.
- One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.
- One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.
- One individual appointed by the Governor.
- Six supervisors of elections appointed by the Secretary of the State.

¹ Section 101.697, F.S.; Rule 1S-2.030, F.A.C. Notwithstanding, the law directs the Department of State to adopt rules providing for the receipt of absentee ballots from “overseas” (civilian and military) voters by “secure electronic means,” if the Department of State determines such security can be established (i.e., verification of the voter, security of the transmission, etc.)

² Section 101.6952(5), F.S.

³ Section 101.6952(2)(a), F.S.

⁴ Section 101.62, F.S.; Rule 1S-2.030, F.A.C. Supervisors begin sending absentee ballots 45 days before each election for those with requests on file with the supervisor, and thereafter upon receipt of a timely request. Overseas voters can request a ballot from their local supervisor when they register to vote using the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). Otherwise, they can timely request absentee ballots via telephone, mail, fax or email.

- Five individuals appointed by the Secretary of State who have relevant expertise in computer technology, the Internet, or other associated technologies.

Members of the Task Force must serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses. The Division of Elections of the Department of State (DOS) must provide support staff for the Task Force and the Agency for State Technology must assist the Task Force upon request.

The Task Force must study and report on issues including, but not limited to:

- Any factor that limits the ability of absent uniformed services voters who are overseas to request, receive, and return a voted absentee ballot within the required time period.
- The costs associated with the development and implementation of an online voting system.
- The feasibility of absent uniformed services voters who are overseas using an online voting system to electronically submit a voted absentee ballot.
- The security of electronically submitting a voted absentee ballot through an online voting system.
- Procedures adopted by other states to facilitate greater electoral participation by absent uniformed services voters who are overseas.

The Secretary of State must submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by July 1, 2017, containing Task Force recommendations for the development and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent uniformed services voters who are overseas to electronically submit a voted absentee ballot.

Veterans' Training and Coursework

Present Situation

State Board of Education – Florida College System

The State Board of Education is the chief implementing and coordinating body of public education in Florida, except for the State University System.⁵ In accordance with Article IX, Section 2, of the State Constitution, the State Board of Education is responsible for supervising the system of free public education as is provided by law and appoints the Commissioner of the Department of Education.

Some of the specific powers of the State Board of Education include adopting and periodically reviewing and revising the Florida Standards, classifying school services, designating certification subject areas, and establishing competencies and certification requirements for all school-based personnel.⁶

There are 28 locally-governed public colleges in the Florida College System. While governed by local boards, the colleges are coordinated under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education. Administratively, the Chancellor of Florida Colleges is the chief executive officer of the system, reporting to the Commissioner of Education who serves as the chief executive officer of Florida's K-20 System.⁷

⁵ Section 1001.02(1), F.S.

⁶ Section 1001.03, F.S.

⁷ Florida Department of Education website, About Us, available at: <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/about-us> (Last visited October 27, 2015).

Board of Governors - State University System

The Board of Governors is the governing body for the State University System of Florida. In accordance with Article IX, Section 7(d), of the State Constitution, it is required to “operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system.” Currently, there are 12 institutions within the State University System.⁸ The System enrolls over 337,000 students, offers nearly 1,800 degree programs at the baccalaureate, graduate, and professional levels, and annually awards over 81,000 degrees at all levels.⁹

College Credit for Military Training

Section 1004.096, F.S., directs the Board of Governors to adopt regulations and the State Board of Education to adopt rules enabling eligible members of the U.S. Armed Forces to earn college-level credit for training and education they acquired while in the military. This appears to include active duty members.

The statute requires that the regulations and rules include procedures for credential evaluation and the award of academic college credit, including, but not limited to, equivalency and alignment of military course work with appropriate college courses, course descriptions, type and amount of college credit that may be awarded, and transfer of credit. Such regulations and rules may decrease the amount of time and cost for service members to receive a postsecondary degree.

As a result, the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education have adopted regulations¹⁰ and rules,¹¹ both requiring their respective institutions to adopt a policy and process that “enables students who are or were eligible members of the U.S. Armed Forces,” to earn appropriate academic college credit for college-level training and education acquired in the military. The phrase, “students who are eligible members of the U.S. Armed forces,” appears to address active duty servicemembers. The phrase, “students who were eligible members of the U.S. Armed Forces,” appears to address students who have separated from military service, including veterans.

Extending the benefit to students who were eligible members of the U.S. Armed Forces, thereby including veterans, appears to go further than the statutory requirement. However, because the statute does not specifically address active duty members or veterans, it is unclear whether veterans were intended to be included.

American Council on Education (ACE)

Since 1945, ACE has provided a collaborative link between the U.S. Department of Defense and higher education through the review of military training and experiences for the award of equivalent college credits for members of the U.S. Armed Forces.¹² ACE has established a rigid process in evaluating military services courses to determine the appropriate amount and level of academic credit that should be awarded by postsecondary institutions.

ACE maintains the *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces*¹³ which is a standard reference for recognizing learning acquired in the military. Under the BOG’s regulation¹⁴,

⁸ The State University System 2025 System Strategic Plan, page 5, available at: http://www.flbog.edu/pressroom/doc/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Revised_FINAL.pdf (Last visited October 27, 2015).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ BOG 6.013 Military Veterans and Active Duty.

¹¹ Rule 6A-14.0302, F.A.C.

¹² American Council on Education, *Ace Military Programs*, available at <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Programs-Main-Page.aspx> (last visited October 27, 2015)

¹³ American Council on Education, *Military Guide Online*, available at <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx> (last visited October 27, 2015)

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each university board of trustees must utilize this guide in order to determine equivalency and alignment of military coursework with appropriate university courses.

According to research, institutions of higher learning allow college credit to be granted for training received in the military if recommended by ACE. However, this does not appear to be a state requirement.

Priority Course Registration for Veterans

Section 1004.075, F.S., requires institutions within the Florida College System and the State University System to provide priority course registration for veterans. Specifically, institutions that offer priority course registration for a portion of its student population must also provide priority course registration for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their eligible family members. In order for the benefit to apply, the recipient must be utilizing GI Bill educational benefits.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill provides legislative findings and intent to assist veterans in utilizing the training and coursework that they receive in the military in their pursuit of a public postsecondary degree.

Specifically, the bill provides legislative findings that many veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces in this state have completed training and coursework during military service, including overseas deployments, which result in tangible and quantifiable strides in their pursuit of a postsecondary degree.

In addition, the bill finds that the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the State University System must work together to ensure that military training and coursework are granted academic credit in order to assist veterans in continuing their education.

Further, the bill intends, not requires, for the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors work collaboratively to do the following:

- Align existing degree programs with applicable military training and experience to maximize academic credit awarded for such training and experience;
- Appoint and train specific faculty within each degree program at each institution as liaisons and contacts for veterans;
- Incorporate outreach services tailored to disabled veterans to inform disabled veterans of disability services provided by the USDVA, and other federal and state agencies, and private entities;
- Facilitate statewide meetings for campus personnel to discuss and develop best practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and hear presentations by individuals with expertise in the unique needs of veterans; and
- Provide veterans with sufficient courses required for graduation, including but not limited to, giving priority registration for veterans.

Option for Veterans to Receive Local and Federal Information

Present Situation

Requirements for License and Identification Card Forms

Currently, in order to receive a license or an identification card, an applicant must submit proof of identity.¹⁵ Additionally, each application form includes the option for the applicant to register emergency

¹⁴ BOG 6.013 Military Veterans and Active Duty

¹⁵ Section 322.08(2), F.S.

contact information and the option to be contacted with information about state and federal benefits available as a result of military service.¹⁶

Florida Vets Connect Initiative

In 2010, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) and the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) partnered to create the Florida Vets Connect initiative to stimulate outreach efforts to veterans in Florida by distributing general state and federal veterans' benefits information via e-mail to those individuals who request such information. The initiative allows veterans to voluntarily identify their veteran status to DHSMV when applying for or renewing a driver license or identification card. Pursuant to a memorandum of understanding, once the driver's license record data is exchanged¹⁷ between the two agencies, the contact information is then forwarded to FDVA to be used to ensure Florida's veterans are provided information regarding benefits to which they may be entitled.¹⁸ According to FDVA, it receives the veterans' contact information (which includes email addresses) from DHSMV and then emails the information to a third party provider. The third party provider then distributes the information via e-mail to the veteran who requests such information on the driver license or identification card application.¹⁹ The following chart depicts the rate that FDVA sent emails to recipients on a monthly basis during the 2015 calendar year.²⁰

Month	Emails Sent
January	3214
February	1458
March	2791
April	2779
May	2825
June	2610
July	2873
August	3173
September	2993
October	3007
November	5314
December	5314
Total	38,351

County and City Veteran Service Officers

Section 292.11, F.S., authorizes each county and city to employ a county or city veteran service officer to provide a myriad of assistance to veterans including presenting claims for and securing benefits or privileges to which veterans are or may become entitled by reason of their service in the military. County veteran service officers are county employees, but are certified by the FDVA.²¹ Each county currently employs a veteran service officer; however, not every city has a veteran service officer.²²

¹⁶ Section 322.08(4), F.S.

¹⁷ Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), DHSMV Contract No.: HSMV-0607—13, May 1, 2013.

¹⁸ Florida CFO Press Release, "Florida Vets Connect' Connects Nearly 30,000 Florida Veterans with Benefits", February 10, 2010; available at: <http://www.myfloridacfo.com/sitepages/newsroom/pressrelease.aspx?id=3738> (Last visited October 27, 2015).

¹⁹ E-mail correspondence with Colleen Krepstekies, Legislative Affairs Director, FDVA (Sept. 30, 2015) (on file with the Senate Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security.). According to the FDVA, it is cost prohibitive to distribute printouts of the veterans' benefits information via the United States mail.

²⁰ Information provided to staff by the FDVA. On file with Veteran & Military Affairs Committee staff.

²¹ Section 292.11(4), F.S.

²² Listing of Florida County Veteran Service Officers, available at http://floridavets.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CVSO_Directory_1-February-2014.pdf (last visited October 28, 2015)

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires the application form for an original, renewal, or replacement driver license or identification card to include the option for veterans to request information not only on state and federal benefits and services available as provided in current law, but also local benefits and services available as a result of military service either through the United States Postal Service or by email.

The DHSMV is required to report monthly to the FDVA the name and mailing address or e-mail address of each veteran who requests the information. The FDVA will then distribute the veterans' contact information to the third-party provider to administer delivery of veteran benefit and service information via the indicated preferred method of delivery (U.S. mail or e-mail). The FDVA will also disseminate the contact information for veterans who request the information to the appropriate county or city veteran service officer in order to facilitate further outreach to veterans.

The bill requires that a third-party provider selected by the FDVA to act on its behalf be a nonprofit organization with sufficient ability to communicate with veterans throughout the state. "Nonprofit organization" is defined as an organization exempt from the federal income tax under s. 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any federal, state, or local governmental entity.

Additionally, the bill requires that a veteran's contact information obtained by a third-party may only be used for purposes outlined in the bill, prohibits a third-party provider from selling a veteran's contact information, and requires a third-party to maintain confidentiality of the contact information in accordance with the public records laws in Ch. 119, F.S., and the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994.²³ Any person who willfully and knowingly violates the aforementioned conditions commits a misdemeanor of the first degree.²⁴

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

- Section 1. Creates the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force
- Section 2. Provides legislative intent regarding academic credit for military training and coursework and collaboration between the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors on student veteran issues.
- Section 3. Amends s. 322.08, F.S., relating to the application for a license and the requirements for a license and identification card forms.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

There is a negative fiscal impact to DOS for the reimbursement of per diem and travel expenses for the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force members. Additionally, the Division of Elections within DOS is required to provide support staff for the Task Force. Depending on the scope of the Task Force's needs, this requirement could impact the ability of the Division to perform its regular duties during an election year and may require additional full-time employees.²⁵

²³ 18 U.S.C. § 2721

²⁴ A first degree misdemeanor is punishable by up to one year in county jail and a \$1,000 fine. Sections 775.082 and 775.083, F.S.

²⁵ Department of State SB 184 agency analysis. On file with Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee staff.

There may be an indeterminate but likely negative fiscal impact to FDVA. The requested information shall be delivered to the veteran by a third-party provider selected by FDVA. According to the FDVA, based off of the current contractual agreement, the cost would be \$11,529, not including the cost of postage and the creation of additional outreach materials.²⁶

The Board of Governors also raised concerns about this bill's potential for increased workload for the state universities and colleges and for the Board itself. The fiscal impact to the State Board of Education, the Board of Governors, and the individual universities and colleges is negative indeterminate but the need for more than .5 FTE at each institution would taper off over time.²⁷

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government expenditures.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Student veterans may receive additional academic support, thus, furthering their pursuit of a postsecondary degree.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The bill does not appear to require counties or municipalities to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds, reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenue in the aggregate, nor reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

The Department of State's agency analysis contains its public position on a web-based voting system:

²⁶ 2016 FDVA agency analysis for HB 429. On file with Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee staff.

²⁷ Florida Board of Governors analysis for SB 184, pg. 4. On file with the Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee staff.

*Based upon existing studies of online voting and the capabilities of current certified voting systems, the Department of State has determined that secure electronic means do not satisfactorily exist to permit the casting of online ballots by voters, including overseas voters.*²⁸

The Secretary of State is a voting member and Chair of the Task Force. Additionally, the Department's analysis identifies the potential disruptive impact of the Task Force (July 1, 2016 – July 1, 2017) because of the partial overlap with the 2016 election cycle. It states that the Task Force staffing duties "could impact the ability of the Division (of Elections) (to) [sic] perform its regular duties during an election year," and notes the possible need for additional full-time employees.²⁹

The Board of Governors noted the following concerns with the bill in their agency analysis:³⁰

...Any law requiring the Board of Governors to "align degree programs" at the universities with specified types of military experience and/or training can be perceived to be in conflict with established Board regulations and accreditation standards.

...Should there be a state-level attempt to align existing university programs with military programs, litigation can be expected from the universities because it will put them in violation of SACSCOC³¹ accreditation requirements.

...Section 3. (2) that calls for the identification and training of "specific faculty within each degree program at each state university" would be difficult and costly to implement due to the number of academic degree programs (1,733 programs) in the State University System.

However, it should be noted that section 2 of the bill provides for legislative intent only.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.

²⁸ Florida Department of State analysis for SB 184, pg. 4-5. On file with Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee staff.

²⁹ *Id.* at pgs. 3-4.

³⁰ State University System of Florida Board of Governors analysis for SB 184, pg. 5. On file with Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee staff.

³¹ Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to military and veterans affairs;
 3 creating the Military and Overseas Voting Assistance
 4 Task Force within the Department of State; specifying
 5 membership of the task force; authorizing
 6 reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses;
 7 prescribing duties of the task force; requiring
 8 submission of a report to the Governor and the
 9 Legislature by a specified date; providing for
 10 expiration of the task force; providing for staffing;
 11 providing legislative findings regarding continuing
 12 education for veterans of the United States Armed
 13 Forces; providing legislative intent for the State
 14 Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the
 15 State University System to work collaboratively to
 16 align existing degree programs at state universities
 17 and Florida College System institutions, train
 18 faculty, incorporate outreach services into existing
 19 disability services, facilitate statewide meetings for
 20 personnel, and provide sufficient courses and priority
 21 registration to veterans; amending s. 322.08, F.S.;
 22 requiring the application form for an original,
 23 renewal, or replacement driver license or
 24 identification card to include an option for veterans
 25 to request written or electronic information on local,
 26 state, and federal benefits and services available as

27 a result of military service; requiring the Department
 28 of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to report monthly
 29 to the Department of Veterans' Affairs the names and
 30 mailing or e-mail addresses of veterans who request
 31 such information; requiring the Department of
 32 Veterans' Affairs to provide veteran contact
 33 information to a third-party provider and the
 34 appropriate county or city veteran service officer;
 35 requiring that requested information be delivered by a
 36 third-party provider; requiring that the third-party
 37 provider be a nonprofit organization; defining the
 38 term "nonprofit organization"; specifying that a
 39 third-party provider may use veteran contact
 40 information only as authorized; prohibiting a third-
 41 party provider from selling veteran contact
 42 information; requiring a third-party provider to
 43 maintain confidentiality of veteran contact
 44 information under specified provisions; providing a
 45 penalty; directing the Department of Highway Safety
 46 and Motor Vehicles to collaborate with the Department
 47 of Veterans' Affairs to administer such provisions;
 48 providing an effective date.

49
 50 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

51
 52 Section 1. Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task

53 Force.—The Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force, a
 54 task force as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes, is created
 55 within the Department of State. The task force is created for
 56 the express purpose of studying issues involving the development
 57 and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent
 58 uniformed services voters who are overseas to electronically
 59 submit voted ballots.

60 (1) The task force is composed of 20 members, as follows:

61 (a) The Secretary of State or his or her designee, who
 62 shall serve as chair of the task force.

63 (b) The Adjutant General or his or her designee.

64 (c) The executive director of the Department of Veterans'
 65 Affairs or his or her designee.

66 (d) The executive director of the Agency for State
 67 Technology or his or her designee.

68 (e) One member of the Senate appointed by the President of
 69 the Senate.

70 (f) One member of the House of Representatives appointed
 71 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

72 (g) One member of the Senate appointed by the Minority
 73 Leader of the Senate.

74 (h) One member of the House of Representatives appointed
 75 by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

76 (i) One member appointed by the Governor.

77 (j) Six supervisors of elections appointed by the
 78 Secretary of State.

79 (k) Five individuals appointed by the Secretary of State,
 80 with relevant expertise in computers, the Internet, or other
 81 associated technologies.

82 (2) Members of the task force shall serve without
 83 compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and
 84 travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

85 (3) The task force, at a minimum, shall study and report
 86 on the following issues:

87 (a) Any factor that limits the ability of absent uniformed
 88 services voters who are overseas to request, receive, and return
 89 absentee ballots within the current statutory time period for
 90 casting absentee ballots.

91 (b) The costs associated with the development and
 92 implementation of an online voting system.

93 (c) The feasibility of absent uniformed services voters
 94 who are overseas using an online voting system to electronically
 95 submit a voted ballot.

96 (d) The security of electronically submitting a voted
 97 ballot through an online voting system.

98 (e) Procedures adopted by other states to facilitate
 99 greater electoral participation among absent uniformed services
 100 voters who are overseas.

101 (4) The Secretary of State shall submit a report to the
 102 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
 103 House of Representatives by July 1, 2017, containing the task
 104 force's recommendation concerning whether the state should

105 pursue the development and implementation of an online voting
 106 system that allows absent uniformed services voters who are
 107 overseas to electronically submit voted ballots. If the task
 108 force favorably recommends an online voting system, the report
 109 must include recommended steps for developing and implementing
 110 such a system. Upon submission of the report, the task force
 111 shall expire.

112 (5) The Division of Elections of the Department of State
 113 shall provide support staff for the task force. The Agency for
 114 State Technology shall assist the task force upon request.

115 Section 2. The Legislature finds that many veterans of the
 116 United States Armed Forces in this state have completed training
 117 and coursework during their military service, including overseas
 118 deployments, resulting in tangible and quantifiable strides in
 119 their pursuit of a postsecondary degree. The Legislature further
 120 finds that the State Board of Education and the Board of
 121 Governors of the State University System must work together to
 122 ensure that military training and coursework are granted
 123 academic credit in order to assist veterans in continuing their
 124 education. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature that
 125 the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors work
 126 collaboratively to:

127 (1) Align existing degree programs, including, but not
 128 limited to, vocational and technical degrees, at each state
 129 university and Florida College System institution with
 130 applicable military training and experience to maximize academic

131 credit awarded for such training and experience.

132 (2) Appoint and train specific faculty within each degree
 133 program at each state university and Florida College System
 134 institution as liaisons and contacts for veterans.

135 (3) Incorporate outreach services tailored to disabled
 136 veterans into existing disability services on the campus of each
 137 state university and Florida College System institution to make
 138 available to such veterans information on disability services
 139 provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,
 140 other federal and state agencies, and private entities.

141 (4) Facilitate statewide meetings for personnel at state
 142 universities and Florida College System institutions who provide
 143 student services for veterans to discuss and develop best
 144 practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and attend
 145 presentations by individuals with expertise in the unique needs
 146 of veterans.

147 (5) Make every effort to provide veterans with sufficient
 148 courses required for graduation, including, but not limited to,
 149 giving priority registration to veterans.

150 Section 3. Paragraph (e) of subsection (2) and subsections
 151 (3) and (4) of section 322.08, Florida Statutes, are amended to
 152 read:

153 322.08 Application for license; requirements for license
 154 and identification card forms.—

155 (2) Each such application shall include the following
 156 information regarding the applicant:

157 ~~(e) Each such application may include fingerprints and~~
 158 ~~other unique biometric means of identity.~~

159 (3) (a) Each such application may include fingerprints and
 160 other unique biometric means of identity.

161 (b) ~~(3)~~ Each such application shall include:

162 1. A consent to release driving record information,
 163 entitling the department to request, receive, and exchange such
 164 information with other jurisdictions.

165 2. ~~(4)~~ Each such application shall include The option for
 166 the applicant to register emergency contact information.

167 3. ~~and~~ The option for an applicant who is a veteran of the
 168 United States Armed Forces to be contacted through the United
 169 States Postal Service or by e-mail with information about local,
 170 state, and federal benefits available as a result of military
 171 service.

172 (4) (a) The department shall report monthly to the
 173 Department of Veterans' Affairs the name and mailing address or
 174 e-mail address of each veteran who requests information pursuant
 175 to subparagraph (3) (b) 3. The Department of Veterans' Affairs
 176 shall provide the contact information for each such veteran to a
 177 third-party provider acting on its behalf and to the appropriate
 178 county or city veteran service officer.

179 (b) The requested information shall be delivered to the
 180 veteran by a third-party provider selected by the Department of
 181 Veterans' Affairs to act on its behalf. The third-party provider
 182 must be a nonprofit organization with sufficient ability to

183 communicate with veterans residing throughout this state. For
 184 purposes of this subsection, the term "nonprofit organization"
 185 means an organization exempt from the federal income tax under
 186 s. 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any federal,
 187 state, or local governmental entity.

188 (c) The contact information of a veteran obtained by a
 189 third-party provider pursuant to this subsection may be used
 190 only as authorized by this subsection. The third-party provider
 191 may not sell such contact information and, except as otherwise
 192 provided, must maintain the confidentiality of the contact
 193 information in accordance with chapter 119 and the federal
 194 Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994, 18 U.S.C. ss. 2721 et
 195 seq. A person who willfully and knowingly violates this
 196 paragraph commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable
 197 as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

198 (d) The department shall collaborate with the Department
 199 of Veterans' Affairs to administer this subsection.

200 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.



Amendment No. 1

COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION

ADOPTED	___	(Y/N)
ADOPTED AS AMENDED	___	(Y/N)
ADOPTED W/O OBJECTION	___	(Y/N)
FAILED TO ADOPT	___	(Y/N)
WITHDRAWN	___	(Y/N)
OTHER	_____	

1 Committee/Subcommittee hearing bill: Veteran & Military Affairs
 2 Subcommittee

3 Representative Steube offered the following:

4 **Amendment (with title amendment)**

5 Remove everything after the enacting clause and insert:

6
 7 Section 1. Present subsection (9) of section 322.08,
 8 Florida Statutes, is renumbered as subsection (10), and a new
 9 subsection (9) is added to that section, to read:

10 322.08 Application for license; requirements for license
 11 and identification card forms.—

12 (9) (a) To support the carrying out of the duties of the
 13 Department of Veterans' Affairs prescribed in s. 292.05 and to
 14 facilitate its outreach to veterans residing in this state, the
 15 application form for an original, a renewal, or a replacement
 16 driver license or identification card must include a voluntary
 17 checkoff authorizing a veteran of the United States Armed Forces

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18 to request written or electronic information on federal, state,
19 and local benefits and services available to veterans. The
20 veteran may elect to receive requested information through
21 United States mail or by e-mail. The requested information shall
22 be delivered to the veteran by any third-party provider selected
23 by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to act on its behalf.

24 (b) The department shall collaborate with the Department
25 of Veterans' Affairs to administer this subsection. The
26 department shall report monthly to the Department of Veterans'
27 Affairs the name and mailing address or e-mail address of each
28 veteran who requests information as provided in paragraph (a).
29 Following receipt of the monthly report, the Department of
30 Veterans' Affairs shall disseminate the contact information for
31 each such veteran to the third-party provider acting on its
32 behalf. The third-party provider must be a nonprofit
33 organization with sufficient ability to communicate with
34 veterans residing throughout this state. For purposes of this
35 paragraph, the term "nonprofit organization" means an
36 organization exempt from the federal income tax under s. 501 of
37 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any federal, state, or
38 local governmental entity.

39 (c) In addition to the requirements of paragraph (b), the
40 Department of Veterans' Affairs shall disseminate the contact
41 information for a veteran who selects the voluntary checkoff to
42 the appropriate county or city veteran service officer in order
43 to facilitate further outreach to veterans.

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44 (d)1. The contact information of a veteran which is
45 obtained by a third-party provider pursuant to this subsection
46 may be used only as authorized by this subsection. The third-
47 party provider may not sell such contact information. Except as
48 otherwise provided, the third-party provider must maintain the
49 confidentiality of the contact information in accordance with
50 chapter 119 and the federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of
51 1994, 18 U.S.C. ss. 2721 et seq.

52 2. A person who willfully and knowingly violates this
53 paragraph commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable
54 as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

55 Section 2. Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task
56 Force.—The Military and Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force, a
57 task force as defined in s. 20.03, Florida Statutes, is created
58 within the Department of State. The task force is created for
59 the express purpose of studying issues involving the development
60 and implementation of an online voting system that allows absent
61 uniformed services voters who are overseas to electronically
62 submit voted ballots.

63 (1) The task force is composed of 11 members, as follows:

64 (a) The Secretary of State or his or her designee, who
65 shall serve as chair of the task force.

66 (b) The Adjutant General or his or her designee.

67 (c) The executive director of the Agency for State
68 Technology or his or her designee.



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69 (d) One member of the Senate appointed by the President of
70 the Senate.

71 (e) One member of the House of Representatives appointed
72 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

73 (f) Three supervisors of elections appointed by the
74 Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections.

75 (g) Three individuals appointed by the Secretary of State,
76 with relevant expertise in computers, the Internet, or other
77 associated technologies.

78 (2) Members of the task force shall serve without
79 compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and
80 travel expenses pursuant to s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

81 (3) The task force, at a minimum, shall study and report
82 on the following issues:

83 (a) Any factor that limits the ability of absent uniformed
84 services voters who are overseas to request, receive, and return
85 absentee ballots within the current statutory time period for
86 casting absentee ballots.

87 (b) The costs associated with the development and
88 implementation of an online voting system.

89 (c) The feasibility of absent uniformed services voters
90 who are overseas using an online voting system to electronically
91 submit a voted ballot.

92 (d) The security of electronically submitting a voted
93 ballot through an online voting system.

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94 (e) Procedures adopted by other states to facilitate
95 greater electoral participation among absent uniformed services
96 voters who are overseas.

97 (4) The Secretary of State shall submit a report to the
98 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
99 House of Representatives by July 1, 2017, containing the task
100 force's recommendation concerning whether the state should
101 pursue the development and implementation of an online voting
102 system that allows absent uniformed services voters who are
103 overseas to electronically submit voted ballots. If the task
104 force favorably recommends an online voting system, the report
105 must include recommended steps for developing and implementing
106 such a system. Upon submission of the report, the task force
107 shall expire.

108 (5) The Division of Elections of the Department of State
109 shall provide support staff for the task force. The Agency for
110 State Technology shall assist the task force upon request.

111 Section 3. Legislative findings and intent; continuing
112 education of veterans of the United States Armed Forces.—The
113 Legislature finds that many veterans of the United States Armed
114 Forces in this state have completed training and coursework
115 during their military service, including overseas deployments,
116 resulting in tangible and quantifiable strides in their pursuit
117 of a postsecondary degree. The Legislature further finds that
118 the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the
119 State University System must work together to ensure that

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120 military training and coursework are granted academic credit in
121 order to assist veterans in continuing their education.

122 Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature that the State
123 Board of Education and the Board of Governors work
124 collaboratively to:

125 (1) Align existing degree programs, including, but not
126 limited to, vocational and technical degrees, at each state
127 university and Florida College System institution with
128 applicable military training and experience to maximize academic
129 credit awarded for such training and experience.

130 (2) Appoint and train specific faculty within each degree
131 program at each state university and Florida College System
132 institution as liaisons and contacts for veterans.

133 (3) Incorporate outreach services tailored to disabled
134 veterans into existing disability services on the campus of each
135 state university and Florida College System institution to make
136 available to such veterans information on disability services
137 provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs,
138 other federal and state agencies, and private entities.

139 (4) Facilitate statewide meetings for personnel at state
140 universities and Florida College System institutions who provide
141 student services for veterans to discuss and develop best
142 practices, exchange ideas and experiences, and attend
143 presentations by individuals with expertise in the unique needs
144 of veterans.

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145 (5) Make every effort to provide veterans with sufficient
146 courses required for graduation, including, but not limited to,
147 giving priority registration to veterans.

148 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.

149
150

151

T I T L E A M E N D M E N T

153 Remove everything before the enacting clause and insert:
154 An act relating to military and veterans affairs; amending s.
155 322.08, F.S.; requiring the application form for an original,
156 renewal, or replacement driver license or identification card to
157 include a voluntary checkoff authorizing veterans to request
158 written or electronic information on federal, state, and local
159 benefits and services for veterans; requiring the requested
160 information to be delivered by a third-party provider; requiring
161 the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to report
162 monthly to the Department of Veterans' Affairs the names and
163 mailing or e-mail addresses of veterans who request information;
164 requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs to disseminate
165 veteran contact information to the third-party provider;
166 requiring that the third-party provider be a nonprofit
167 organization; defining the term "nonprofit organization";
168 requiring that the Department of Veterans' Affairs provide
169 veteran contact information to the appropriate county or city
170 veteran service officer; specifying that a third-party provider

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171 may use veteran contact information only as authorized;
172 prohibiting a third-party provider from selling veteran contact
173 information; requiring a third-party provider to maintain
174 confidentiality of veteran contact information under specified
175 provisions; providing a penalty; creating the Military and
176 Overseas Voting Assistance Task Force within the Department of
177 State; specifying membership of the task force; authorizing
178 reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses; prescribing
179 duties of the task force; requiring submission of a report to
180 the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; providing
181 for expiration of the task force; providing for staffing;
182 providing legislative findings and intent regarding continuing
183 education for veterans of the United States Armed Forces;
184 providing legislative intent to require collaboration between
185 the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the
186 State University System in achieving specified goals regarding
187 educational opportunities for veterans; providing an effective
188 date.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 505 Voter Identification
SPONSOR(S): Burgess, Jr. and Cortes, B. and others
TIED BILLS: IDEN./SIM. **BILLS:** SB 666

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Government Operations Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	Toliver	Williamson
2) Veteran & Military Affairs Subcommittee		Renner <i>JK</i>	Thompson <i>JAK</i>
3) State Affairs Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Florida Election Code requires a voter to provide certain forms of identification for various electoral activities. The acceptable forms of identification vary according to the activity, but examples include a United States passport, Florida driver license or identification card, military identification, or student identification.

The bill adds veteran health identification cards issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and licenses to carry a concealed weapon or firearm to the current lists of valid forms of identification for purposes of identification at the polls, completing absentee ballot affidavits, and identification for first time voters registering by mail.

The bill may have a fiscal impact on the Department of State if it is required to revise its existing rules and publications. In addition, the bill may have a fiscal impact on the supervisors of elections due to their having to alter absentee ballot instructions for certain first-time voters and absentee ballot affidavits.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Background

Voter Identification

The Florida Election Code¹ requires certain forms of identification for various electoral activities. The acceptable forms of identification vary according to the activity.

A person registering to vote in Florida for the first time may hand deliver or mail his or her voter registration application.² A person registering by mail who has never previously voted in Florida and who the Department of State verifies has not been issued a current and valid Florida driver license, Florida identification card, or social security number must provide a copy of a specified form of identification or indicate that he or she is exempt from providing such identification³ prior to voting.⁴ The following are valid and acceptable forms of identification provided the identification has not expired and includes the name and photograph of the applicant:

- United States passport.
- Debit or credit card.
- Military identification.
- Student identification.
- Retirement center identification.
- Neighborhood association identification.
- Public assistance identification.⁵

In addition, a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, and other government documents (excluding voter identification cards) are considered valid and acceptable forms of identification provided they are current and contain the name and current residence address of the applicant.⁶

If an applicant meeting the aforementioned requirements opts to vote by absentee ballot and has not yet provided the required identification by the time his or her ballot is mailed, the applicant must still provide a copy of one of the acceptable forms of identification discussed above or indicate he or she is exempt.⁷

¹ Chapters 97-106, F.S.

² Section 97.053(1), F.S.

³ Section 97.0535(4), F.S., provides that the following persons are exempt from the identification requirements:

- Persons 65 years of age or older.
- Persons with a temporary or permanent physical disability.
- Members of the uniformed service on active duty who, by reason of such active duty, are absent from the county on election day, and their spouses or dependents.
- Members of the Merchant Marine who, by reason of service in the Merchant Marine, are absent from the county on election day, and their spouses or dependents.
- Persons currently residing outside the United States who are eligible to vote in Florida.

⁴ Section 97.0535(1), F.S.

⁵ Section 97.0535(3)(a), F.S.

⁶ Section 97.0535(3)(b), F.S.

⁷ Section 101.6923, F.S.

Current law requires the precinct register to be used at the polls for the purpose of identifying the elector before allowing him or her to vote. The clerk or inspector must require each elector upon entering the polling place to present one of the following current and valid picture identifications for the purpose of identifying each elector before allowing him or her to vote:

- Florida driver license.
- Florida identification card issued by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.
- U.S. passport.
- Debit or credit card.
- Military identification.
- Student identification.
- Retirement center identification.
- Neighborhood association identification.
- Public assistance identification.⁸

An elector voting by absentee ballot must sign a voter's certificate.⁹ The supervisor of elections compares the signature of the elector on the voter's certificate with the signature in the voter registration books or the precinct register to determine if the elector is registered to vote in the county.¹⁰ If the signatures do not match, the elector has until 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election to complete an absentee ballot affidavit to correct the discrepancy.¹¹ The instructions for the absentee ballot affidavit require the elector to make a copy of a form of identification that includes the person's name and photograph or a form of identification that shows the person's name and current residence address. The following are acceptable forms of such identification that must accompany the absentee ballot affidavit when provided to the supervisor of elections:

- U.S. passport;
- Debit or credit card;
- Military identification;
- Student identification;
- Retirement center identification ;
- Neighborhood association identification;
- Public assistance identification; or
- Current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document (excluding voter identification cards).¹²

Veteran Health Identification Card

The veteran health identification card is issued by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) to veterans who are enrolled in the USDVA health care system for identification and check-in at USDVA appointments.¹³ In order to receive an identification card, the veteran must apply for enrollment in the USDVA health care system and provide a primary and secondary form of identification.¹⁴ Once the veteran's enrollment is verified, the veteran must have his or her picture taken at the local USDVA medical center for inclusion on the identification card.¹⁵

License to Carry a Concealed Weapon or Firearm

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is authorized to issue licenses to carry concealed weapons or concealed firearms to qualified persons.¹⁶ Recipients of a Florida concealed

⁸ Section 101.043(1)(a), F.S.

⁹ Section 101.64(1), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 101.68(1), F.S.

¹¹ Section 101.68(4)(b), F.S.

¹² Section 101.68(4)(c), F.S.

¹³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Benefits, available at <http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic/index.asp> (last visited Jan. 11, 2016).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Section 790.06(1), F.S.

weapon or firearm license in part must be 21 years of age or older; demonstrate competency with a firearm; and, unless currently serving overseas in the United States Armed Forces, currently reside in the United States as a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident alien.¹⁷

Effect of the Bill

The bill adds veteran health identification cards issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and licenses to carry a concealed weapon or firearm to the current lists of valid forms of identification for purposes of identification at the polls, completing absentee ballot affidavits, and identification for first time voters registering by mail.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1 amends s. 97.0535, F.S., to expand the list of acceptable forms of identification for first time voters registering by mail.

Section 2 amends s. 101.043, F.S., to expand the list of acceptable forms of identification for identification at the polls.

Section 3 amends s. 101.68, F.S., to expand the list of acceptable forms of identification for completing an absentee ballot affidavit.

Section 4 amends s. 101.6923, F.S., to expand the list of acceptable forms of identification for certain first-time voters.

Section 5 provides an effective date of upon becoming a law.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

There may be a fiscal impact to the Department of State if it is required to revise its existing rules and publications.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

There may be a fiscal impact to supervisors of elections associated with the alteration of the special instructions required by s. 101.6923, F.S., and absentee ballot affidavits required by s. 101.68(4), F.S.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Article VII, section 18, of the Florida Constitution explicitly exempts election laws from the municipality/county "mandates" provision within that section.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill may require the Division of Elections within the Department of State to alter its rules to conform to the changes in law; however, no additional rulemaking authority is necessary.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to voter identification; amending s. 97.0535, F.S.; expanding the list of acceptable forms of identification for certain voter registration applicants to include veteran health identification cards and licenses to carry a concealed weapon or firearm; amending s. 101.043, F.S.; expanding the list of acceptable forms of identification at a polling place or early voting site to include veteran health identification cards and licenses to carry a concealed weapon or firearm; amending ss. 101.68 and 101.6923, F.S.; revising absentee ballot and special absentee ballot instructions, respectively, to conform to changes made by the act; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section 97.0535, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

97.0535 Special requirements for certain applicants.—

(3)(a) The following forms of identification shall be considered current and valid if they contain the name and photograph of the applicant and have not expired:

1. United States passport.
2. Debit or credit card.
3. Military identification.

- 27 4. Student identification.
 - 28 5. Retirement center identification.
 - 29 6. Neighborhood association identification.
 - 30 7. Public assistance identification.
 - 31 8. Veteran health identification card issued by the United
 - 32 States Department of Veterans Affairs.
 - 33 9. A license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm issued
 - 34 pursuant to s. 790.06.
- 35 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
- 36 101.043, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
- 37 101.043 Identification required at polls.—
- 38 (1)(a) The precinct register, as prescribed in s. 98.461,
- 39 shall be used at the polls for the purpose of identifying the
- 40 elector at the polls before allowing him or her to vote. The
- 41 clerk or inspector shall require each elector, upon entering the
- 42 polling place, to present one of the following current and valid
- 43 picture identifications:
- 44 1. Florida driver license.
 - 45 2. Florida identification card issued by the Department of
 - 46 Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.
 - 47 3. United States passport.
 - 48 4. Debit or credit card.
 - 49 5. Military identification.
 - 50 6. Student identification.
 - 51 7. Retirement center identification.
 - 52 8. Neighborhood association identification.

53 9. Public assistance identification.

54 10. Veteran health identification card issued by the
 55 United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

56 11. A license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm
 57 issued pursuant to s. 790.06.

58 Section 3. Paragraph (d) of subsection (4) of section
 59 101.68, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

60 101.68 Canvassing of absentee ballot.-

61 (4)

62 (d) Instructions must accompany the absentee ballot
 63 affidavit in substantially the following form:

64
 65 READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THE
 66 AFFIDAVIT. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY CAUSE YOUR
 67 BALLOT NOT TO COUNT.

68
 69 1. In order to ensure that your absentee ballot will be
 70 counted, your affidavit should be completed and returned as soon
 71 as possible so that it can reach the supervisor of elections of
 72 the county in which your precinct is located no later than 5
 73 p.m. on the 2nd day before the election.

74 2. You must sign your name on the line above (Voter's
 75 Signature).

76 3. You must make a copy of one of the following forms of
 77 identification:

78 a. Identification that includes your name and photograph:

79 United States passport; debit or credit card; military
 80 identification; student identification; retirement center
 81 identification; neighborhood association identification; ~~or~~
 82 public assistance identification; veteran health identification
 83 card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;
 84 or a Florida license to carry a concealed weapon or firearm; or

85 b. Identification that shows your name and current
 86 residence address: current utility bill, bank statement,
 87 government check, paycheck, or government document (excluding
 88 voter identification card).

89 4. Place the envelope bearing the affidavit into a mailing
 90 envelope addressed to the supervisor. Insert a copy of your
 91 identification in the mailing envelope. Mail, deliver, or have
 92 delivered the completed affidavit along with the copy of your
 93 identification to your county supervisor of elections. Be sure
 94 there is sufficient postage if mailed and that the supervisor's
 95 address is correct.

96 5. Alternatively, you may fax or e-mail your completed
 97 affidavit and a copy of your identification to the supervisor of
 98 elections. If e-mailing, please provide these documents as
 99 attachments.

100 Section 4. Subsection (2) of section 101.6923, Florida
 101 Statutes, is amended to read:

102 101.6923 Special absentee ballot instructions for certain
 103 first-time voters.-

104 (2) A voter covered by this section shall be provided with

105 printed instructions with his or her absentee ballot in
 106 substantially the following form:

107

108 READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY BEFORE MARKING YOUR
 109 BALLOT. FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS MAY CAUSE
 110 YOUR BALLOT NOT TO COUNT.

111

112 1. In order to ensure that your absentee ballot will be
 113 counted, it should be completed and returned as soon as possible
 114 so that it can reach the supervisor of elections of the county
 115 in which your precinct is located no later than 7 p.m. on the
 116 date of the election. However, if you are an overseas voter
 117 casting a ballot in a presidential preference primary or general
 118 election, your absentee ballot must be postmarked or dated no
 119 later than the date of the election and received by the
 120 supervisor of elections of the county in which you are
 121 registered to vote no later than 10 days after the date of the
 122 election.

123 2. Mark your ballot in secret as instructed on the ballot.
 124 You must mark your own ballot unless you are unable to do so
 125 because of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write.

126 3. Mark only the number of candidates or issue choices for
 127 a race as indicated on the ballot. If you are allowed to "Vote
 128 for One" candidate and you vote for more than one, your vote in
 129 that race will not be counted.

130 4. Place your marked ballot in the enclosed secrecy

131 envelope and seal the envelope.

132 5. Insert the secrecy envelope into the enclosed envelope
 133 bearing the Voter's Certificate. Seal the envelope and
 134 completely fill out the Voter's Certificate on the back of the
 135 envelope.

136 a. You must sign your name on the line above (Voter's
 137 Signature).

138 b. If you are an overseas voter, you must include the date
 139 you signed the Voter's Certificate on the line above (Date) or
 140 your ballot may not be counted.

141 c. An absentee ballot will be considered illegal and will
 142 not be counted if the signature on the Voter's Certificate does
 143 not match the signature on record. The signature on file at the
 144 start of the canvass of the absentee ballots is the signature
 145 that will be used to verify your signature on the Voter's
 146 Certificate. If you need to update your signature for this
 147 election, send your signature update on a voter registration
 148 application to your supervisor of elections so that it is
 149 received no later than the start of canvassing of absentee
 150 ballots, which occurs no earlier than the 15th day before
 151 election day.

152 6. Unless you meet one of the exemptions in Item 7., you
 153 must make a copy of one of the following forms of
 154 identification:

155 a. Identification which must include your name and
 156 photograph: United States passport; debit or credit card;

157 military identification; student identification; retirement
 158 center identification; neighborhood association identification;
 159 ~~or~~ public assistance identification; veteran health
 160 identification card issued by the United States Department of
 161 Veterans Affairs; or a Florida license to carry a concealed
 162 weapon or firearm; or

163 b. Identification which shows your name and current
 164 residence address: current utility bill, bank statement,
 165 government check, paycheck, or government document (excluding
 166 voter identification card).

167 7. The identification requirements of Item 6. do not apply
 168 if you meet one of the following requirements:

169 a. You are 65 years of age or older.

170 b. You have a temporary or permanent physical disability.

171 c. You are a member of a uniformed service on active duty
 172 who, by reason of such active duty, will be absent from the
 173 county on election day.

174 d. You are a member of the Merchant Marine who, by reason
 175 of service in the Merchant Marine, will be absent from the
 176 county on election day.

177 e. You are the spouse or dependent of a member referred to
 178 in paragraph c. or paragraph d. who, by reason of the active
 179 duty or service of the member, will be absent from the county on
 180 election day.

181 f. You are currently residing outside the United States.

182 8. Place the envelope bearing the Voter's Certificate into

183 the mailing envelope addressed to the supervisor. Insert a copy
184 of your identification in the mailing envelope. DO NOT PUT YOUR
185 IDENTIFICATION INSIDE THE SECRECY ENVELOPE WITH THE BALLOT OR
186 INSIDE THE ENVELOPE WHICH BEARS THE VOTER'S CERTIFICATE OR YOUR
187 BALLOT WILL NOT COUNT.

188 9. Mail, deliver, or have delivered the completed mailing
189 envelope. Be sure there is sufficient postage if mailed.

190 10. FELONY NOTICE. It is a felony under Florida law to
191 accept any gift, payment, or gratuity in exchange for your vote
192 for a candidate. It is also a felony under Florida law to vote
193 in an election using a false identity or false address, or under
194 any other circumstances making your ballot false or fraudulent.

195 Section 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

OPPAGA

Veterans' Credentialing Programs

A presentation to the House Veteran and Military Affairs Subcommittee

Laila Racevskis, Ph.D.
Senior Legislative Analyst

January 19, 2016



Project Scope

- ▶ Current Florida credentialing efforts
- ▶ Other states' credentialing programs
- ▶ Feasibility of adopting other states' credentialing models

What is Credentialing?

- ▶ Process of meeting specific standards of an occupation and obtaining official recognition of credentials through licenses, certifications, apprenticeships

Core Credentialing Requirements

- Education and/or training from approved programs
- Relevant work experience
- Licensing/certification examinations
- Continuing education requirements

Why Is Credentialing Important to Veterans?

- ▶ Licensing or certification may be required by law or by a prospective employer
- ▶ Credentials can lead to higher pay and improved prospects for promotion
- ▶ Credentials can demonstrate that military training and skills are equivalent to those gained through civilian pathways

Several Military Occupations Require Credentials for Transition to Civilian Workforce

Top 10 Military Occupations of Transitioning Veterans

- Aircraft Mechanics
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
- Computer Support Specialist/Operators/Security Specialists
- Cooks/Food Preparation Workers
- Police/Security Guards
- Health Care Support Occupations
- Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks
- Stock Clerks/Order Filers
- Logisticians
- Truck Drivers



Translating Military Skills to the Civilian Workforce Is Challenging

- ▶ Translating military to civilian occupations is a complex and lengthy process
- ▶ Veterans report that translating their skills to the civilian workforce is one of the greatest challenges in finding a job
- ▶ Numerous federal programs help prepare veterans for civilian employment, but program information is not consolidated

Findings

Florida Provides Many Services for Separating Veterans

Florida offers a variety of education/training, licensing/certification, and employment services

- College credits, priority course registration, tuition waivers
- Military training equivalency for law enforcement officers
- Online job search tools, e.g., Employ Florida Vets

Veterans Florida, Inc.

- Mission includes connecting veterans to educational, training, and employment opportunities

Existing Florida Programs May Provide Models for Streamlining Veterans' Licensing

- ▶ Department of Health's Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) System

Expedited licensing for health care professionals licensed in other states

- ▶ Department of Financial Services' OPERATION DISPATCH

Provides reduced training costs, credit for military experience, and expedited certification exam for military firefighters

Recent Florida Initiatives Utilized Several Best Practices

- Coordinate with all relevant stakeholders
- Assess equivalency of military training
- Provide aids to assess gaps
- Promote programs through press releases, media events and web sites

Many States Have Passed Legislation to Facilitate Credentialing for Veterans

- ▶ Grant in-state tuition and academic credits for military training
- ▶ Allow professional licenses to remain active and exempt continuing education requirements while on active duty
- ▶ Offer endorsement of professional licenses in a new state
- ▶ Direct state licensing agencies to accept military training and experience

Experiences of Other States Have Yielded Recommendations to Help Ensure Success

- When designing programs, be as specific as possible regarding occupations, licensing boards and agencies
- Work with multiple stakeholders to gather and develop data on veterans' training and experience
- Build stakeholder support, particularly from licensing boards and agencies and postsecondary education decision makers

Options

The Legislature Could Consider Four Options to Facilitate Occupational Licensing for Florida's Veterans

1. Develop a consolidated online resource for veterans' training, licensing, and employment information
2. Rely on Veterans Florida's current efforts to examine veterans training equivalency and licensing issues
3. Convene a group of relevant stakeholders to examine veterans' training equivalency and licensing issues
4. Require state agencies to implement veterans' licensing programs

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Questions?

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