

**BOLDLY SERVING MORE THAN 30 YEARS**



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

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[www.FloridaVets.org](http://www.FloridaVets.org)

***POW-MIA Vietnam Veterans Bracelet Memorial***

**SB 416** substituted for **HB 163** Enrolled Text (ER) Filed

- Establishes POW-MIA Vietnam Veterans Bracelet Memorial in Tallahassee next to Vietnam Memorial Flag. Memorial has been paid for and maintained by Vietnam Veterans of Big Bend Chapter 96

***Services for Veterans and Their Families***

**SB 260** substituted for **HB 231** on Enrolled Text (ER) Filed

Requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish the Florida Veterans' Care Coordination Program to provide behavioral health care referral and care coordination services for veterans and their families. And to partner with Florida 211 Network participants to provide such services

***Veterans Employment and Training***

**SB 586** Substituted for **HB 435** Enrolled Text (ER) Filed

- Directs Florida Is For Veterans, Inc. (Veterans Florida), to serve as state's principal assistance organization under United States Department of Defense's SkillBridge program

***Veterans' Preference in Employment***

**HB 0541** Substituted for **SB 922**- Enrolled Text (ER) Filed

- authorizes state & political subdivisions to waive certain postsecondary educational requirements for employment for certain service members & veterans, requires each political subdivision to develop & implement veterans' recruitment plan and modifies point preferences given to veterans & their family members when numerically based selection process is used for hiring

***Veterans Treatment Courts***

**SB 764** Substituted for **HB 7023** Enrolled Text (ER) Filed

- Creates uniform standards and procedures for VTCs. The proposed bill allows a court with criminal jurisdiction to create and administer a VTC, which may adjudicate felonies and misdemeanors, with the exception of the pretrial intervention of misdemeanor criminal traffic offenses.
- To be eligible to participate in a VTC, a service member or veteran must:
  - Have a service-related mental health condition, traumatic brain injury, substance use disorder, or psychological problem; and
  - Show that his or her participation is in the interest of justice and to his or her benefit and the benefit of the community, as determined by the state attorney in consultation with the court.

***Special and Specialty License Plates-***

[HB 249](#) Substituted for [SB 676](#) Ordered engrossed, then enrolled

***HONOR FLIGHT LICENSE PLATES***

- The department shall develop an Honor Flight license plate as provided in this section and s. 320.08053. The plate must bear the colors and design approved by the department. The word “Florida” must appear at the top of the plate, and the words “Honor Flight” must appear at the bottom of the plate. The remaining fees shall be used to further the Honor Flight Network’s mission of transporting military veterans to Washington, D.C., in order to visit the memorials dedicated to honoring those who have served and sacrificed for the United States.

***Army of Occupation Medal License Plate***

- The owner or lessee of an automobile or truck for private use, a truck weighing not more than 7,999 pounds, or a recreational vehicle as specified in s. 320.08(9)(c) or (d) which is not used for hire or commercial use who is a resident of this state and a current or former member of the United States military who was permanently assigned to occupation forces in specific overseas locations during the Cold War between May 9, 1945, and October 2, 1990, upon application to the department accompanied by proof of active membership or former active duty status during this period at one of these locations and payment of the license tax for the vehicle as provided in s. 320.08, shall be issued a license plate as provided by s. 320.06 which, in lieu of the registration license number prescribed by s. 320.06, is stamped with the words “Army of Occupation” and a likeness of the subject medal, followed by the registration license number of the plate. Proof that the applicant was awarded the Army of Occupation Medal is sufficient to establish eligibility for the license plate.

**HB 429, *Purple Star Campuses Enrolled Text (ER) Filed***

Students from military families experience academic and social-emotional challenges as they relocate to new schools due to a parent's change in duty station. In order to assist students from military families with this transition, the bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to establish a Purple Star Campus Program (program) that identifies schools that support military-connected children, including public schools, charter schools, and schools participating in the Florida educational choice scholarship program.

Under the program, schools will be recognized as Purple Star Campuses if they meet the following requirements:

Designate a staff member as a military liaison;

- Maintain a webpage on the school's website which includes resources for military students and families;
- Maintain a student-led transition program to assist military students in transitioning into the school;
- Offer professional development training opportunities for staff members on issues relating to military students; and
- Reserve at least five percent of open enrollment seats for military-connected students.