

## CHAPTER 2012-199

### Senate Bill No. 276

An act relating to recognition of military personnel and veterans; amending s. 265.003, F.S.; creating the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council within the Department of Veterans' Affairs; providing for membership, terms of members, and organization of the council; revising provisions relating to nomination of persons to the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame; providing for annual acceptance of nominations by the council; authorizing the council to establish criteria for such nominations; creating s. 683.146, F.S.; designating August 7 of each year as "Purple Heart Day"; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 265.003, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

265.003 Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.—

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature to recognize and honor those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the State of Florida.

(2) There is established the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame.

(a) The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame is administered by the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs without appropriation of state funds.

(b) The Department of Management Services shall set aside an area on the Plaza Level of the Capitol Building along the northeast front wall and shall consult with the Department of Veterans' Affairs regarding the design and theme of the area.

(c) Each person who is inducted into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame shall have his or her name placed on a plaque displayed in the designated area of the Capitol Building.

(3)(a) The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council is created within the Department of Veterans' Affairs as an advisory council, as defined in s. 20.03(7), consisting of seven members who are all honorably discharged veterans, at least four of whom must be members of a congressionally chartered veterans service organization. The Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Attorney General, the Chief Financial Officer, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall each appoint one member. For the purposes of ensuring staggered terms, the council members appointed by the Governor, the Attorney General, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Commissioner of Agriculture shall be appointed to 4-year terms beginning on January 1 of the year of appointment, and the

council members appointed by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs shall be appointed to 2-year terms beginning on January 1 of the year of appointment. After the initial appointments, all appointees shall be appointed to 4-year terms. A member whose term expires shall continue to serve on the council until a replacement is appointed.

(b) The members shall annually elect a chair from among their number. The council shall meet at the call of the chair, at the request of the executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, or at such times as may be prescribed by the council. A majority of the members of the council currently appointed constitutes a quorum, and a meeting may not be held unless a quorum is present. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the council present is necessary for any official action by the council.

(c) Members of the council may not receive compensation or honorarium for their services. Members may be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, as provided in s. 112.061, however, no state funds may be used for this purpose.

(d) The original appointing authority may remove his or her appointee from the council for misconduct or malfeasance in office, neglect of duty, incompetence, or permanent inability to perform official duties or if the member is adjudicated guilty of a felony.

(4)(3)(a) The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council Department of Veterans' Affairs shall annually accept nominations of persons to be considered for induction into the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame and shall then transmit a list of up to 20 nominees its recommendations to the Department of Veterans' Affairs for submission to the Governor and the Cabinet who will select the nominees to be inducted.

(b) In selecting its nominees for submission making its recommendations to the Governor and the Cabinet, the Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council Department of Veterans' Affairs shall give preference to veterans who were born in Florida or adopted Florida as their home state or base of operation and who have made a significant contribution to the state in civic, business, public service, or other pursuits.

(5)(4) The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame Council Department of Veterans' Affairs may establish criteria and set specific time periods for acceptance of nominations and for the process of selection of nominees for membership and establish a formal induction ceremony to coincide with the annual commemoration of Veterans' Day.

Section 2. Section 683.146, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

683.146 Purple Heart Day.—

(1) August 7 of each year is designated as "Purple Heart Day."

(2) The Governor may annually issue a proclamation designating August 7 as “Purple Heart Day.” Public officials, schools, private organizations, and all residents of the state are encouraged to commemorate Purple Heart Day and honor those wounded or killed while serving in any branch of the United States Armed Services.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.

Approved by the Governor May 4, 2012.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 4, 2012.