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CONTACT:
Eleanor McDonough
Office of Representative Rita Harris
eleanor.mcdonough@myfloridahouse.gov
(850) 717-5044

Alfred Yorston
Office of Senator Victor M. Torres, Jr.
Yorston.Alfred@flsenate.gov
(850) 487-5025

Representative Rita Harris and Senator Torres Introduce Bill to Expand DROP Eligibility for School Employees

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Last week, **Representative Rita Harris (D-Orlando)** and **Senator Victor Torres (D-Kissimmee)** filed **House Bill 905** and **Senate Bill 896** to expand Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) eligibility for school employees and personnel.

This legislation would remove the time limitation for DROP eligibility and allow school personnel including teachers, school nurses, administrators, and bus drivers to return to work immediately without impacting their retirement to address the shortages faced by educational institutions.

"Florida is dealing with a staff shortage in their schools, and it's not only a shortage of teachers, it's also a shortage of support staff like bus drivers, school counselors and even school nurses and in fact, retired faculty can't even come back to volunteer at a school," said **Representative Harris**. "This bill would allow retired school staff to come back into employment and fill the staffing gap to ensure Florida students aren't waiting on the side of the road for a bus, or not able to access a guidance counselor at school."

"The DROP program provides options for all Florida State Retirement System employees to supplement their financial retirement benefits and plan for their final retirement employment date and these school employee personnel who are currently excluded should be able to access the same benefits as all other FRS employees," said **Senator Torres.**

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