

By: Garcia of Bexar

H.B. No. 5639

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a veteran housing program established by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 501, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 501.115 to read as follows:

Sec. 501.115. VETERAN HOUSING PROGRAM. (a) The department shall establish a housing program for inmates who are veterans who served not less than 180 days on active duty in the United States armed forces and were honorably discharged.

(b) The program established under Subsection (a) must:

(1) dedicate certain cellblocks or dormitories for use in the program; and

(2) include procedures to:

(A) verify the eligibility of each inmate during the diagnostic process; and

(B) allow an inmate who is a veteran described by Subsection (a) to opt in to the housing dedicated for use in the program under Subdivision (1).

(c) In housing inmates under the program established under Subsection (a), the department:

(1) shall comply with the requirements of Section 501.112; and

(2) may not house an inmate in a cellblock or dormitory

1 dedicated for use in the program if the department determines that
2 housing the inmate in the cellblock or dormitory would jeopardize
3 the safety or security of other inmates or staff.

4 (d) A cellblock or dormitory dedicated for use in the
5 program under Subsection (b)(1) may, if necessary, be used to house
6 inmates who are not veterans described by Subsection (a).

7 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
8 of this Act, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice shall
9 establish the program required by Section 501.115, Government Code,
10 as added by this Act.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.