

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3211

By: Heflin

Defense Affairs and State-Federal Relations  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Veteran's Land Board (VLB), through its authority in Chapter 161, Natural Resources Code, provides loans for the purchase of land to eligible veterans. The VLB Land Program has been making land loans to veterans since 1949 and is the only program of its kind in the nation. Former members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam cannot return to their native country, and cannot receive any benefits for their service. Many of them are now citizens, or legal residents, of the United States. HB 3211 seeks to recognize their service as former allies by expanding the definition of "veteran" for eligibility for VLB benefits to include former members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1 adds that a person who served in the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam between Feb. 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975 be also considered a "veteran" for purposes of Chapter 161, natural Resources Code.

SECTION 2 clarifies that if the VLB changes the definition of "veteran" to include members of the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam, that they will include procedures for establishing proof of their service.

SECTION 3 strikes the definition of "veteran" in Section 162.001 (a) (8), Natural Resources Code, and states that "veteran" has the same meaning as given in Section 161.001.

SECTION 4 strikes the definition of "veteran" in Section 164.002 (a) (6), Natural Resources Code, and states that "veteran" has the same meaning as given in Section 161.001.

SECTION 5 repeals certain sections of the Natural Resources Code giving authority to the VLB to change the definition of "veteran" by rule, and also a section regarding discharge of certain members of the military.

SECTION 6 - EFFECTIVE DATE: This Act takes effect September 1, 2003, unless it receives the votes necessary for immediate effect.