

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD

Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 78TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 31, 2003

TO: Honorable Leticia Van de Putte, Chair, Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs & Military Installations

FROM: John Keel, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB655 by Shapleigh (Relating to members and veterans of the armed forces.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill, as substituted, adds Chapter C to Section 434 of the Government Code relating to members and veterans of the armed forces requires the Department of Information Resources to establish and maintain a veterans website at TexasOnline including electronic filing and access to state and federal benefits programs. The bill requires the Veterans Commission to create an electronic version of the state veterans benefits booklet and provide electronic and printed copies to veterans county service officers and the personnel office of each state or federal military installation in Texas and requires the Windham School District to provide refurbished computers at no cost to veterans county service officers. The bill adds Section 656.27 to the Government Code requiring state agencies to give veterans employment preference until the agency workforce is composed of at least 40 percent veterans. The bill adds Section 161.075 of the Natural Resources Code requiring the Veterans Land Board to provide lending institutions information regarding state land and housing benefits programs for veterans in Texas. The bill also requires the Secretary of State to study the feasibility and cost of establishing procedures to allow a person to cast an electronic ballot under specified conditions. The Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all members of each house; otherwise it takes effect September 1, 2003.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated. County Governments may incur minimal costs to copy and distribute the state veteran's benefit booklet.

Source Agencies: 313 Department of Information Resources, 403 Veterans Commission, 701 Central Education Agency

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