

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2335

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Defense Affairs & State-Federal Relations  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The United States Department of Defense (DoD) has announced plans to transition the U.S. military forces and to achieve huge federal savings through the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. This process could close as much as 25 percent of DoD's base infrastructure, and the closure of even one of our 18 major military installations could be devastating to certain communities and a tremendous blow to our State.

However, as the DoD realigns its forces, Texas could actually gain missions, to include tens of thousands of troops moving into an area all at once. While this expansion on the economy is a good thing, the communities will also have a huge burden to build new infrastructure to accommodate the increase in population. While the BRAC decisions won't be finalized until the end of 2005, this expansion will need to happen before the new troops arrive, which can be within 18 months.

CSHB 2335 directs state agencies to assess the programs that they have to see how their programs can affect defense base communities that have been affected both adversely and positively by the BRAC decisions, and to assign a liaison to work with these communities.

### **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 directs the Texas Education Agency to identify states and DoD schools from which a significant number of students will be transferring under the 2005 BRAC decisions. The agency is to provide appropriate transition assistance to these students, and shall adopt reciprocity agreements with these states and schools. The agency is also to report the results of its efforts every January 1, to the appropriate legislative committees.

SECTION 2 allows the State Board for Educator Certification to issue a certificate to an educator who holds an appropriate certificate issued by the Department of Defense and has passed a comparable exam.

SECTION 3 directs the State Board for Educator Certification to issue one-year teaching certificates to dependents of military personnel at a reduced rate of \$25, and to reduce the education review fee to \$50 for these dependents. The board is also directed to enter into reciprocity agreements with those states from which a significant number of teachers are coming from and with the DoD. The board shall report the results of their efforts every January 1 to the appropriate legislative committees.

SECTION 4 states that the office of the governor shall provide information to defense base communities about economic development incentives offered by the state. The office shall also tell how the communities may take advantage of those opportunities.

SECTION 5 directs each state agency to assess their programs and how they may assist defense communities that are affected either adversely or positively by BRAC decisions in 2005. It also directs those agencies that may assist defense communities to assign an employee to be a liaison between the agency and the defense community and base-transition representatives. These

liaisons are to contact each affected defense community no later than January 1, 2006 and shall provide all relevant information on how their programs may help the community.

Finally, this section states that these agencies must include in their annual reports a description of the steps they have taken to assist defense communities and military service members and their dependents after a base closure or realignment, and what has come of these efforts. They must also include the agency's ongoing efforts to assist these communities in the future. This subchapter expires September 1, 2007.

SECTION 6 states that members of the United States armed forces or their dependents, are entitled to receive credit for any hours of required supervision that are earned in another state or country in order to fulfill the eligibility requirements provided by Section 505.353, Occupations Code. This section also states that the Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners shall accept the hours of required supervision of a person who qualifies under the previous section without requiring previous approval of the hours.

The board is also allowed to waive the requirements for an applicant if they are determined to have a license from another state with substantially equivalent requirements. The board shall complete the processing of an application no later than 30 days after the application is submitted to the board. Finally, the board is to report to the appropriate legislative committees the number of applications filed, the number of licenses issued, and the state in which the applicant was licensed before applying in this state.

SECTION 7 directs the Texas Department of Transportation to initiate communication with defense communities to develop long-range and short-range transportation plans in order to make the traffic flow within the community more efficient and make the military transportation needs of the base a priority. The department shall consider the input of the community as well as the character and extent of the military operations conducted at the base.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.

#### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE**

The substitute takes out the provision for nursing reciprocity, which was SECTION 6. It also adds to the social workers' requirements, directing them to pursue reciprocity with the other states and to complete the license processing in no more than 30 days. The substitute also directs those agencies pursuing reciprocity, TEA, SBEC, and the Social Worker Examiners Board, to report the results of their efforts annually. Finally, the substitute directs the State Board of Educator Certification to pursue reciprocity with those states from which a significant number of teachers are coming from and to pursue reciprocity with the Department of Defense. It gives the board the authority to issue certificates to teachers who hold a certificate issued by the Department of Defense, and it changes "temporary teaching certificate" to "one-year certificate."