

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1058

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

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Many veterans struggle with traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder and, as a result, have trouble reintegrating into family and work life upon returning from combat.

SB 1058 requires the adjutant general's department to develop a referral program to provide referrals to service members for reintegration services. The bill also requires the Department of State Health Services and the Health and Human Services Commission to develop a directory of services and other resources, tools, and counseling programs available to aid veterans and their immediate families in the reintegration process.

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

SB 1058 amends the Government Code to define "servicemember." SB 1058 amends the Government Code, to require the adjutant general's department (department) to develop a program to provide referrals to servicemembers for reintegration services. It sets forth the requirements of the program. Requires that the department ensure that persons providing referral to servicemen have sufficient training to ensure that the information provided to servicemembers is accurate, and that service members are notified in a timely manner about the service referral program. It requires the department, in developing the program, to consult with the state military forces, the National Guard Bureau, the United States Veterans Health Administration, the Texas A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine, and The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Further, SB 1058 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Veterans Commission (commission) to collect and maintain for each county the number of servicemembers and veterans residing in the county, through surveys or other reasonable and accurate estimation methods, and to annually publish the information on the commission's website.

Further, SB 1058 requires the commission to collaborate with and assist the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) in compiling and maintaining the directory of services established under Section 161.552, Health and Safety Code (directory) and requires the commission to provide the directory on or through links on the commission's website.

SB 1058 requires the executive commissioner of HHSC (executive commissioner) to ensure that each health and human services agency (agency) adopts policies requiring the agency to take certain actions set forth in this subsection related to direction of servicemembers to appropriate service providers. SB 1048 requires the executive commissioner to make the directory accessible to each agency.

SB 1058 amends the Health & Safety Code to require DSHS and HHSC to compile, maintain, and disseminate through the Texas Information and Referral Network (network) and other appropriate media a directory of services and other resources, tools, and counseling programs available to servicemembers and their immediate family. The bill sets out the required information to be placed in the directory and requires DSHS and HHSC to organize the directory

in a manner allowing a person to locate services in a specific community in the state. Further, it requires DSHS and HHSC to develop and maintain the directory in collaboration with local, state, and national private and governmental organizations and requires DSHS to provide the directory to the network in the time periods and in the manner and format specified by the network. SB 1058 requires DSHS to provide the directory on or through links appearing on its website.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.