

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3179
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Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The fund for veterans' assistance was created to provide a source of revenue for grants to local veterans service organizations, eligible charities, and local governments that offer assistance to Texas veterans and their families. Grant recipients provide emergency financial assistance, family counseling, housing assistance for homeless veterans, and transportation assistance, among other needed services.

In recent years, the Texas lottery scratch-off game, Veterans Cash, has been the primary source of revenue for the fund for veterans' assistance. Since its introduction, the Veterans Cash scratch-off game has provided millions of dollars for grants to entities helping Texas veterans. However, the need for veterans' assistance is great. C.S.H.B. 3179 seeks to expand revenue streams for the fund for veterans' assistance by including a space on each motor vehicle registration renewal notice for voluntary donations to the fund.

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

C.S.H.B. 3179 amends the Transportation Code to specify that a contribution made to the fund for veterans' assistance may be used only for the purposes of the fund. The bill requires the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to do the following: include space in a specified place on each motor vehicle registration renewal notice that allows a person renewing a registration to indicate the amount that the person is voluntarily contributing to the fund for veterans' assistance; provide an opportunity to contribute in a certain manner to the fund for veterans' assistance that is similar to the opportunity to contribute during the initial registration of a motor vehicle, in any registration renewal system that succeeds the system in place on September 1, 2011; and provide an opportunity for a person to contribute to the fund for veterans' assistance during the registration renewal process on the department's Internet website.

C.S.H.B. 3179 authorizes the county assessor-collector, if a person makes such a contribution and does not pay the full amount of a registration fee, to credit all or a portion of the contribution to the person's registration fee. The bill requires TxDMV to consult with the Texas Veterans Commission in performing the department's duties under the bill's provisions. The bill makes its provisions applicable only to a motor vehicle registration renewal notice issued for a registration that expires on or after January 1, 2012.

C.S.H.B. 3179 reenacts and amends Section 434.017(a), Government Code, as amended by Chapters 840 (S.B. 1940) and 1385 (S.B. 1655), Acts of the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, 2009, to make nonsubstantive technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 3179 contains a provision not included in the original requiring the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to provide a certain opportunity to contribute to the fund for veterans' assistance in any registration renewal system that succeeds the system in place on September 1, 2011.

C.S.H.B. 3179 contains a provision not included in the original authorizing the county assessor-collector, if a person makes a contribution to the fund for veterans' assistance and does not pay the full amount of a motor vehicle registration fee, to credit all or a portion of the contribution to the person's registration fee.

C.S.H.B. 3179 contains a provision not included in the original making its provisions applicable only to a motor vehicle registration renewal notice issued for a registration that expires on or after January 1, 2012.

C.S.H.B. 3179 differs from the original by making the bill effective on passage or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011, whereas the original makes the bill effective September 1, 2011.

C.S.H.B. 3179 differs from the original in nonsubstantive ways.