

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 846
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Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
7/19/2013
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

National reports show that as many as 18 veterans each day commit suicide. Additionally, an average of one active duty service member commits suicide every day. Since 2001, the Texas National Guard has reported 40 suicides among its members. It is vital to help government officials who regularly come in contact with veterans understand how to recognize warning signs and know how to get help for that veteran. Veteran county service officers spend their careers seeing veterans and their families.

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) conducts annual training, certification, and accreditation courses for veteran county service officers. S.B. 846 requires TVC to coordinate with the Department of State Health Services to incorporate a suicide prevention component in that training and also removes the requirement that course material be approved by the governing board of TVC, shifting that responsibility to the professional staff of TVC.

S.B. 846 amends current law relating to training, certification, and accreditation provided or regulated by the Texas Veterans Commission.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 434.038(d) and (e), Government Code, as follows:

(d) Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to develop standard course materials, training curriculum, and examinations to be used for county service officer certification and United States Department of Veterans Affairs accreditation. Deletes existing text requiring the members of TVC to approve the course materials, training curriculum, and examinations before TVC is authorized to distribute the materials and administer examinations.

(e) Requires TVC to take certain actions, including coordinating with the Department of State Health Services to incorporate a suicide prevention component as part of the accreditation training and examination. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2013.