

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1373
By: Hinojosa
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Honor and Remember flag is an important symbol of unwavering support and commitment to those American men and women who have courageously given their lives in selfless service to the country. Interested parties report that the Honor and Remember flag has already been adopted in more than 10 states. C.S.S.B. 1373 seeks to direct state office buildings, the State Cemetery, and each veterans cemetery managed by the Veterans' Land Board to display the Honor and Remember flag on specified days and on any date on which a Texas resident is killed while serving on active duty in the U.S. military.

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.S.B. 1373 amends the Government Code to require the Honor and Remember flag to be displayed at each state office building, at the State Cemetery, and at each veterans cemetery managed by the Veterans' Land Board on certain days as specified by the bill and on any date on which a Texas resident is killed while serving on active duty in the U.S. military. The bill requires a facility that will not have staff available to display the Honor and Remember flag on a specified day to instead display the flag on the last preceding day the staff is available and to leave the flag on display on that day.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.S.B. 1373 may differ from the engrossed version in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and highlighted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the engrossed and committee substitute versions of the bill.

SENATE ENGROSSED

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 2165, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 2165.0061 to read as follows:

Sec. 2165.0061. DISPLAY OF HONOR AND REMEMBER FLAG. (a) In this section, "Honor and Remember flag" means the Honor and Remember, Inc. flag.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 2165, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 2165.0065 to read as follows:

Sec. 2165.0065. DISPLAY OF HONOR AND REMEMBER FLAG. (a) In this section, "Honor and Remember flag" means the Honor and Remember, Inc., flag.

(b) The Honor and Remember flag shall be displayed at each state office building on:

- (1) the third Saturday in May, "Armed Forces Day";
- (2) the last Monday in May, "Memorial Day";
- (3) the 14th day of June, "Flag Day";
- (4) the fourth day of July, "Independence Day";
- (5) the third Friday in September, "National POW/MIA Recognition Day";
- (6) the last Sunday in September, "Gold Star Mother's Day";
- (7) the 11th day in November, "Veterans Day";and
- (8) whenever a resident of this state is a state military casualty.

SECTION 2. The Honor and Remember flag is designated as the symbol of our state's concern and commitment to honoring and remembering the lives of all members of the United States armed forces who have lost their lives while serving or as a result of service and the symbol of our state's commitment to honoring their families.

SECTION 3. The Honor and Remember flag's red field represents the blood shed by the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives for freedom, and the flag's white field is in recognition of the purity of that sacrifice. The flag's blue star is a symbol of active service in military conflict that dates back to World War I. The flag's gold star signifies the ultimate sacrifice of a warrior in active service who is not returning home and reflects the value of the life given. The folded flag element highlights this nation's final tribute to a fallen service member and a family's sacrifice. The flag's flame symbolizes the eternal spirit of the departed.

(b) The Honor and Remember flag shall be displayed at each state office building, at the State Cemetery under Section 2165.256, and at each veterans cemetery managed by the Veterans' Land Board on:

- (1) the third Saturday in May, "Armed Forces Day";
- (2) the last Monday in May, "Memorial Day";
- (3) the 14th day of June, "Flag Day";
- (4) the fourth day of July, "Independence Day";
- (6) "National POW/MIA Recognition Day";
- (7) the last Sunday in September, "Gold Star Mother's Day"; and
- (5) the 11th day of November, "Veterans Day";
- (8) any date on which a resident of this state is killed while serving on active duty in the armed forces of the United States.

(c) If a facility to which Subsection (b) applies will not have staff available to display the Honor and Remember flag on the day provided by Subsection (b), the facility's staff shall display the flag on the last preceding day the staff is available and leave the flag on display on the day provided by Subsection (b).

SECTION 2. The Honor and Remember flag is designated as the symbol of our state's concern and commitment to honoring and remembering the lives of all members of the United States armed forces who have lost their lives while serving or as a result of service and their families.

SECTION 3. The Honor and Remember flag's red field represents the blood shed by brave men and women who sacrificed their lives for freedom, and the flag's white border recognizes the purity of that sacrifice. The flag's blue star is a symbol of active service in military conflict that dates back to World War I. The flag's gold star signifies the ultimate sacrifice of a warrior in active service who is not returning home and reflects the value of the life given. The folded flag element highlights this nation's final tribute to a fallen service member and a family's sacrifice. The flag's flame symbolizes the eternal spirit of the departed.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.