

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 832
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Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
6/9/2015
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 832 increases the focus and coordination for veterans mental health services through the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services.

The Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services was created in 2011 with the purpose of bringing state agencies and non-profit organizations together to streamline services for veterans and propose legislative recommendations. At the time, the law required workgroups to form around certain topics. One of those workgroups combined health and mental health issues.

Since 2011, there has been a steady stream of reports about the poor quality of health services delivered by the United States Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). Moreover, reports from the United States Department of Defense and the VA have estimated that 22 veterans commit suicide every day.

S.B. 832 authorizes state agencies to consider health and mental health as distinct issues.

S.B. 832 amends current law relating to the coordinating workgroups of the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services.

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 Section 434.154(a), Government Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services may, by majority vote, establish the following coordinating workgroups to focus on specific issues affecting veterans, servicemembers, and their families:

- (1) health;
- (2) mental health;
- (3) employment;
- (4) higher education;
- (5) criminal justice;
- (6) housing;
- (7) transportation;
- (8) women veterans; and

(9) any other coordinating workgroup considered necessary.

Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2015.