

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1641
By: Hefner
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised about the amount of paperwork with which disabled veterans are burdened when compelled to prove their disability status. H.B. 1641 seeks to streamline and simplify this process by providing for the inclusion of a disabled veteran designation and branch of service on the driver's license or personal identification certificate of such a veteran for purposes of obtaining certain services or benefits available to disabled veterans in Texas.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

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

H.B. 1641 amends the Transportation Code to require the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to include a disabled veteran designation and the branch of the service in which a disabled veteran served in any available space on the face of a personal identification certificate or driver's license or on the reverse side of a personal identification certificate or driver's license issued to a veteran who has suffered a service-connected disability with a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs certified disability rating of at least 50 percent or 40 percent if the rating is due to the amputation of a lower extremity, on request of such a disabled veteran who provides proof sufficient to DPS. The bill authorizes a disabled veteran, for purposes of obtaining a service or benefit available for disabled veterans in Texas, to use the personal identification certificate or driver's license as satisfactory proof that the disabled veteran has the requisite disability rating and of branch of service and honorable discharge. The bill expressly disqualifies the personal identification certificate and the driver's license as satisfactory proof of the disabled veteran's disability rating for purposes of obtaining a property tax exemption provided by state law. The bill requires a disabled veteran who renews the personal identification certificate or driver's license to provide proof sufficient to DPS of the disabled veteran's disability rating.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.