

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 805
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Veteran Affairs & Border Security
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

According to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the State of Texas has the highest women veteran population in the nation with a total of 183,597 women veterans. Additionally, in the 2016 Interim Report to the Texas Legislature, the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations (VAMI) reported that the number of women veterans in the state continues to increase.

Concerned stakeholders believe that the state's effort to assist women veterans through the Texas Women Veteran Program could be strengthened to provide additional services and information to this unique population.

S.B. 805 addresses this concern by providing that the women veterans coordinator serve as a liaison between state and federal agencies and organizations that provide benefits and services to women veterans. Additionally, the bill provides for the establishment of a clearinghouse relating to services and resources for women veterans. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

S.B. 805 amends current law relating to Texas women veterans.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Veterans Commission in SECTION 5 of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 434.203, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 434.203. COORDINATOR. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text and makes no further changes to this subsection.

(b) Requires the women veterans coordinator (coordinator) or the coordinator's designee to serve as a liaison between state and federal agencies and organizations that provide benefits and services to women veterans.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 434.204, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 434.204. GENERAL PROGRAM DUTIES. Includes providing information to women veterans on services and resources provided by state or federal agencies and organizations to women veterans, in collaboration with appropriate state agencies, as a required duty of the Texas Women Veterans Program. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter E, Chapter 434, Government Code, by adding Sections 434.212, 434.213, and 434.214, as follows:

Sec. 434.212. WOMEN VETERANS REPORT. Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, and legislature a report on women veterans in this

state. Authorizes the report to be delivered electronically and requires that the report make certain estimations, identify the unique problems faced by women veterans, and recommend policy proposals, initiatives, and funding levels to address the identified problems.

Sec. 434.213. WOMEN VETERANS COMMUNITY OUTREACH CAMPAIGN. Requires the coordinator designated under Section 434.203, in consultation with the Governor's Commission for Women, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and any other appropriate agency, to conduct a community outreach campaign to meet certain outcomes.

Sec. 434.214. APPLICATION FOR STATE AGENCY PROGRAMS, SERVICES, OR ASSISTANCE. (a) Provides that this section applies to a state agency in the executive branch of state government, including a health and human services agency, that provides to adult women in this state a program, a service, or assistance, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the supplemental nutrition assistance program, the women's health program, Medicaid, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, and a housing program or service or housing assistance.

(b) Requires a state agency to include in each application for a program, a service, or assistance provided by the agency to adult women:

(1) a space to indicate whether the applicant is a veteran; and

(2) model language informing the applicant that she may be entitled to additional services because of her veteran status.

(c) Requires TVC to develop the model language required on an application under Subsection (b)(2). Requires that the language include a link to the veterans website established under Section 434.102 (Veterans Website) or, for an online application, a hyperlink to that website.

SECTION 4. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 662, Government Code, by adding Section 662.065, as follows:

Sec. 662.065. WOMEN VETERANS DAY. (a) Provides that June 12 is Women Veterans Day to recognize the role of women in the military forces and to commemorate the sacrifices of and valor displayed by Texas women veterans.

(b) Requires that Women Veterans Day be regularly observed by appropriate programs and activities.

SECTION 5. Requires the coordinator, not later than November 1, 2018, to establish the women veterans community outreach campaign as required under Section 434.213, Government Code, as added by this Act, and TVC to adopt any rules necessary to implement the campaign.

SECTION 6. (a) Requires TVC, not later than December 1, 2017, to develop the model application language required by Section 434.214, Government Code, as added by this Act, and post that information on TVC's Internet website.

(b) Requires each state agency subject to Section 434.214, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than March 1, 2018, to modify the agency's application for programs, services, or assistance as necessary to implement that section.

SECTION 7. Effective date: September 1, 2017.