

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1679
By: Lucio
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that the requirement for certain counties to establish a veterans county service office is an unfunded mandate. S.B. 1679 seeks to ensure that these offices are properly funded by providing for money appropriated to the Texas Veterans Commission from the veterans' assistance fund to be used for grants to veterans county service offices.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Veterans Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1679 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Veterans Commission, in making grants to address veterans' needs from money appropriated from the fund for veterans' assistance, to use at least five percent of the money appropriated to the commission from the fund in each state fiscal year to provide grants to veterans county service offices. The bill requires a veterans county service office that receives a grant under the fund to use the money to provide direct assistance and services to veterans residing in the county served by that office. The bill authorizes the commission, on July 1 of each state fiscal year in which the commission has not received sufficient grant requests from veterans county service offices to make grants to the offices in the amount of five percent of the money appropriated to the commission in that state fiscal year, to use any amount of the five percent remaining on that date for any purpose for which the commission is authorized to use money appropriated from the fund. The bill expressly prohibits these provisions from being construed to prevent the commission from using more than five percent of the money appropriated to the commission from the fund to provide grants to veterans county service offices. The bill requires the commission to adopt rules governing the award of grants to veterans county service offices under the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.