

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1698
By: Lucio
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that the state should do more to improve the quality of life of women veterans in Texas and to better address the unique needs of those veterans. S.B. 1698 seeks to address this issue by providing for a biennial report regarding women veterans and the establishment of a women veterans community outreach campaign.

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

S.B. 1698 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Veterans Commission, 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 Texas. The bill authorizes the report to be delivered electronically and requires the report to estimate the number of women veterans in Texas, the number of women veterans who contact the commission for assistance, and the number of women veterans who receive assistance from the veterans commission, the Texas Workforce Commission, the Department of State Health Services, and other state agencies; to identify the unique problems faced by women veterans; and to recommend policy proposals, initiatives, and funding levels to address those problems.

S.B. 1698 requires the state's women veterans coordinator, in consultation with the Governor's Commission for Women, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and any other appropriate agency, to conduct a community outreach campaign to provide information relating to and increase awareness of benefits and services available to women veterans, improve access to benefits and services for women veterans, increase participation of women veterans in programs that provide benefits and services, provide information on the significant contributions of women veterans in this state, and provide information relating to and increase awareness of support groups and other organizations relating to family services, including services for women veterans who are single parents. The bill requires the women veterans coordinator, not later than November 1, 2018, to establish the outreach campaign and requires the veterans commission, not later than November 1, 2018, to adopt any rules necessary to implement the campaign.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2017.