

By: Neave

H.B. No. 1045

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a women veterans suicide tracking system and required reporting of women veteran suicides by certain persons.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter E, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.217 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.217. WOMEN VETERANS SUICIDE TRACKING SYSTEM; REQUIRED REPORTING OF CERTAIN SUICIDES. (a) The program, in collaboration with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, shall develop and maintain a system for tracking the number of suicides of women veterans in this state and determining the number of those women veterans who received services from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The tracking system must include data:

(1) available from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(2) reported to the program under Subsection (b).

(b) A person who knows that the cause of death for a woman veteran is suicide shall report the suicide to the program and provide any information the person may have that may assist the program in determining whether the woman received services from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) The following persons shall provide to the program in accordance with Subsection (b) any relevant information the person

1 obtains related to the suicide death of a woman veteran:

2 (1) a medical examiner or a justice of the peace who is
3 acting as a coroner;

4 (2) a health care facility licensed under Subtitle B,
5 Title 4, Health and Safety Code; or

6 (3) a mental health facility as defined by Section
7 571.003, Health and Safety Code.

8 (d) Information about the suicide of a woman veteran
9 obtained under this chapter is confidential and is not subject to
10 disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, is not subject to
11 subpoena, and may not otherwise be released or made public.

12 (e) Not later than December 31 of each year, the program
13 shall submit to the legislature a report that includes:

14 (1) the number of suicides of women veterans that were
15 reported to the program under this section during the preceding
16 year;

17 (2) the number of women described by Subdivision (1)
18 who received services from the United States Department of Veterans
19 Affairs;

20 (3) information on whether the suicide rate of women
21 veterans in this state is decreasing or increasing;

22 (4) an evaluation of the effectiveness of statewide
23 prevention and awareness campaigns in decreasing the number of
24 suicides by women veterans in this state; and

25 (5) recommendations for improving the effectiveness
26 of statewide prevention and awareness campaigns.

27 SECTION 2. Not later than December 31, 2019, the Texas Women

1 Veterans Program shall develop the tracking system required by
2 Section 434.217, Government Code, as added by this Act.

3 SECTION 3. Notwithstanding Section 434.217, Government
4 Code, as added by this Act:

5 (1) a person is not required to comply with Section
6 434.217(c) until January 1, 2020; and

7 (2) the Texas Women Veterans Program is not required
8 to submit a report required by Section 434.217(e) to the
9 legislature until December 31, 2020.

10 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.