

By: Watson, et al.
(Flynn)

S.B. No. 607

Substitute the following for S.B. No. 607:

By: Flynn

C.S.S.B. No. 607

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the operations and functions of the Veterans' Land
3 Board and the sunset review date for and programs administered by
4 the board.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 161.0111, Natural Resources Code, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 Sec. 161.0111. SUNSET PROVISION. The Veterans' Land Board
9 is subject to review under Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas
10 Sunset Act), but is not abolished under that chapter. The board
11 shall be reviewed during the period in which state agencies
12 abolished in 2031 are reviewed [~~2019~~] and every 12th year after that
13 [~~2019 are reviewed~~].

14 SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 161, Natural Resources
15 Code, is amended by adding Section 161.0141 to read as follows:

16 Sec. 161.0141. SEPARATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES. The board
17 shall develop and implement policies that clearly separate the
18 policy-making responsibilities of the board and the management
19 responsibilities of the executive secretary, assistant executive
20 secretary, and staff of the board.

21 SECTION 3. Section 161.023, Natural Resources Code, is
22 amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (d) to
23 read as follows:

24 (b) The training program must provide the person with

1 information regarding:

2 (1) the law governing board operations [~~the~~
3 ~~legislation that created the board~~];

4 (2) the programs, functions, rules, and budget of the
5 board;

6 (3) the scope of and limitations on the rulemaking
7 authority of the board;

8 (4) the results of the most recent formal audit of the
9 board;

10 (5) [~~(4)~~] the requirements of:

11 (A) laws relating to open meetings, public
12 information, administrative procedure, and disclosure of conflicts
13 of interest; and

14 (B) other laws applicable to members of a state
15 policy-making body in performing their duties; and

16 (6) [~~(5)~~] any applicable ethics policies adopted by
17 the board or the Texas Ethics Commission.

18 (d) The commissioner shall create a training manual that
19 includes the information required by Subsection (b). The
20 commissioner shall distribute a copy of the training manual
21 annually to each member of the board. Each member of the board
22 shall sign and submit to the commissioner a statement acknowledging
23 that the member has received and reviewed the training manual.

24 SECTION 4. Section 161.031(a), Natural Resources Code, is
25 amended to read as follows:

26 (a) The executive secretary or his or her designee shall
27 prepare and maintain a written plan to assure implementation of a

1 program of equal employment opportunity whereby all personnel
2 transactions are made without regard to race, color, disability
3 [~~handicap~~], sex, religion, age, or national origin. The plan shall
4 include:

5 (1) a comprehensive analysis which meets federal and
6 state guidelines of all the agency's work force by race, sex, ethnic
7 origin, class of position, and salary or wages;

8 (2) plans for recruitment, evaluation, selection,
9 appointment, training, promotion, and other personnel policies;

10 (3) procedures by which a determination can be made of
11 significant underutilization in the agency work force of all
12 persons for whom federal and state guidelines encourage a more
13 equitable balance and steps reasonably designed to overcome any
14 identified underutilization; and

15 (4) objectives and goals, with appropriate timetables
16 for the achievement of the objectives and goals, assignments of
17 responsibility for their achievement, and an appropriate program
18 for reviewing and maintaining these goals and objectives once
19 achieved.

20 SECTION 5. Section 161.501, Natural Resources Code, is
21 amended to read as follows:

22 Sec. 161.501. PURPOSE OF SUBCHAPTER; CONSTRUCTION. The
23 purpose of this subchapter is to authorize the board to provide
24 loans to veterans and certain members of the Texas State Guard for
25 the purchase of land that are secured by a mortgage, deed of trust,
26 or other lien on the land. This subchapter shall be liberally
27 construed to effect that purpose.

1 SECTION 6. Section 161.502(2), Natural Resources Code, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 (2) "Loan" means a [~~veterans'~~] land loan made or
4 acquired by the board under this subchapter secured by a mortgage,
5 deed of trust, or other lien on the land purchased with the proceeds
6 of the loan.

7 SECTION 7. Section 161.504, Natural Resources Code, is
8 amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (a-1) to
9 read as follows:

10 (a) To qualify for a loan under this subchapter, a person
11 must be:

12 (1) a veteran at the time the person applies for the
13 loan; or

14 (2) a member of the Texas State Guard who, at the time
15 the person applies for the loan:

16 (A) has completed at least 10 years of service as
17 a member of the Texas State Guard; and

18 (B) is not considered to have been dishonorably
19 discharged from the Texas State Guard.

20 (a-1) If an eligible veteran dies after filing an
21 application for a loan, the veteran's surviving spouse may complete
22 the transaction.

23 SECTION 8. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this
24 section, Section 161.023, Natural Resources Code, as amended by
25 this Act, applies to a member of the Veterans' Land Board appointed
26 before, on, or after the effective date of this Act.

27 (b) A member of the Veterans' Land Board who, before the

1 effective date of this Act, completed the training program required
2 by Section 161.023, Natural Resources Code, as that law existed
3 before the effective date of this Act, is required to complete
4 additional training only on subjects added by this Act to the
5 training program as required by Section 161.023, Natural Resources
6 Code, as amended by this Act. A board member described by this
7 subsection may not vote, deliberate, or be counted as a member in
8 attendance at a meeting of the board held on or after December 1,
9 2019, until the member completes the additional training.

10 SECTION 9. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.