

By: Watson, et al.

S.B. No. 607

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the operations and functions of the Veterans' Land Board and the sunset review date for and programs administered by the board.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) The training program must provide the person with

information regarding:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(d) The commissioner shall create a training manual that includes the information required by Subsection (b). The commissioner shall distribute a copy of the training manual annually to each member of the board. On receipt of the training manual, each member of the board shall sign and submit to the commissioner a statement acknowledging receipt of the training manual.

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

(a) The executive secretary or his or her designee shall

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

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

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

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

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

21 SECTION 5. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this  
22 section, Section 161.023, Natural Resources Code, as amended by  
23 this Act, applies to a member of the Veterans' Land Board appointed  
24 before, on, or after the effective date of this Act.

25 (b) A member of the Veterans' Land Board who, before the  
26 effective date of this Act, completed the training program required  
27 by Section 161.023, Natural Resources Code, as that law existed

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

8 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.