

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERAN AFFAIRS & BORDER SECURITY

Monday, February 24, 2020

1:00 PM

Harlingen, Texas

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs & Border Security was held on Monday, February 24, 2020, in the Harlingen, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Donna Campbell, Chair
Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.
Senator Charles Schwertner
Senator Kel Seliger

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Bob Hall, Vice Chair
Senator Nathan Johnson
Senator José Menéndez

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The Chair recognized Navy Veteran Paul Theobald to lead the Committee in the pledges to the United States and Texas flags.

The Chair made introductory remarks. The Chair then recognized the members of the Committee to make introductory remarks.

The chair laid out the first interim charge of the hearing:

Veteran Treatment Courts: Review the effectiveness of diverting veterans from the traditional criminal justice system to veteran treatment courts. Make recommendations to strengthen veteran treatment court outcomes and expand access to locations not currently served by the courts.

Chairwoman Campbell opened invited testimony on the interim charge. Witnesses testifying are shown on the attached list.

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The Chair laid out the second interim charge of the hearing:

Veteran Health Care: Examine the adequacy of long-term health care services and support options for veterans in Texas. Identify under-served areas and barriers to accessing quality care for both institutional as well as home and community based settings. Discuss the potential impact of federal reforms, such as the implementation of the Veterans Affairs MISSION Act on care delivery. Make recommendations to best leverage federal assistance and create greater efficiencies in veteran health care delivery.

Chairwoman Campbell opened invited testimony on the interim charge. Witnesses testifying are shown on the attached list.

The Chair laid out the third interim charge of the hearing:

Veteran Mental Health: Review suicide prevention strategies and programs identified by the federal Defense Suicide Prevention Office and make recommendations to connect at-risk individuals with available resources as they transition into veteran status.

Chairwoman Campbell opened invited testimony on the interim charge. Witnesses testifying are shown on the attached list.

Chairwoman Campbell opened public testimony on the three monitoring interim charges. Witnesses testifying on the charges are shown on the attached list.

The chair moved that the public testimony be closed; without objection, it was so ordered.

There being no further business, at 4:49 PM Senator Campbell moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Donna Campbell, Chair

Brandon Gajeton, Clerk