

Amend **CSSB 1** (house committee printing), in Article II of the bill, following the appropriations to the Health and Human Services Commission (page II-36), by adding the following appropriately numbered rider:

_____. Study on Veteran Suicides. (a) Out of funds appropriated above to the Health and Human Services Commission for Strategy L.1.1, HHS System Supports (page II-35), the Health and Human Services Commission, in collaboration with the Texas Veterans Commission, the Department of State Health Services, the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services, the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council, local mental health authorities, and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, shall conduct a study on veteran suicides in this state.

(b) The study conducted under this rider must:

(1) use data available from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and other governmental entities to collect information from the preceding five years regarding:

(A) the veteran status of a deceased individual;

(B) the cause of death of a veteran;

(C) whether a deceased veteran received services from a local mental health authority or a state or federal agency that provides mental health services or support to veterans;

(D) a deceased veteran's demographic data, including the veteran's race, gender, and age; and

(E) any other known information that may correlate with an increased risk of suicide; and

(2) evaluate current methods of collecting, storing, and reporting veteran suicide data and recommend improvements to current systems.

(c) Information about the suicide of a veteran obtained by the Health and Human Services Commission for the purposes of the study conducted under this rider is confidential and is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, is not subject to subpoena, and may not otherwise be released or made public.

(d) Not later than September 1, 2022, the Health and Human Services Commission shall submit to the legislature a report that summarizes the findings of the study conducted under this rider,

and includes:

(1) the number of veteran suicides that were identified by the commission during the preceding five years;

(2) the number of veterans described by Subdivision (1) who received services from local mental health authorities or state or federal agencies that provide mental health services or support to veterans;

(3) information regarding whether the rate of veteran suicides in this state is decreasing or increasing; and

(4) demographic information and other known information that may be correlated with increased risk of suicide, as available.