

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERAN AFFAIRS

Tuesday, May 3, 2022

1:00 PM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.012

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 was held on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.012, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Kelly Hancock, Chair
Senator Bob Hall, Vice Chair
Senator César Blanco
Senator Sarah Eckhardt
Senator Roland Gutierrez
Senator Kel Seliger

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Larry Taylor

The chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The Committee heard invited testimony on the following Interim Charges:

- **State Veteran Cemeteries:** Evaluate the current oversight of the Texas State Veteran Cemeteries to ensure that these sacred and essential grounds are being maintained, repaired, and treated with respect. Ensure that the needs of our veterans are being met by reviewing the number, location, and funding of the cemeteries. Examine and make recommendations for the financing mechanism for the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries to ensure sustainability.
- **Veteran Benefits:** Explore and report on options to remove barriers for companies offering veteran benefits and consider policies that could leverage additional public-private-partnerships. Identify opportunities to connect veterans to existing business resources and available state services. Recommend ways to increase matching federal

funding for veteran benefits. Review current law for consistency in eligibility for state veteran benefits and recommend any necessary changes.

- **Veteran Mental Health:** Review the currently accepted forms of treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and consider the creation of a program which would require completion of a multi-modality treatment plan including traditional talk therapy, limbic system therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), and emotionally focused individual therapy (EFIT).
- **Veteran Mental Health:** Identify the training and resources available to urban and rural first responders when assisting veterans experiencing a mental health crisis. Make recommendations for how to best support first responders in these crisis situations.

All witnesses are shown on the attached list.

There being no further business, at 3:43 PM, Senator Hancock moved that the Committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Kelly Hancock, Chair

Kennedy Calvo, Clerk