**BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 493

By: Hughes

Defense & Veterans' Affairs

Committee Report (Unamended)

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Over the past two-and-a-half years, members of the U.S. armed forces have been less than honorably discharged based solely on their refusal to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Because of this discharge, such veterans may be denied certain benefits and services from the state. S.B. 493

seeks to address this issue by establishing that these veterans are considered honorably

discharged by the State of Texas.

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase

the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility

of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

**RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking

authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

**ANALYSIS**

S.B. 493 amends the Government Code to require that a former member of the U.S. armed forces

who received a less than honorable discharge due to their refusal to receive a vaccination against

COVID-19 be considered to have received an honorable discharge for purposes of determining

qualifications for any veterans benefits or services from the state. For the discharge to be

considered honorable, the former armed forces member must prove to the Texas Veterans

Commission that their refusal to receive a vaccination against COVID-19 was the sole reason

for their less than honorable discharge.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2023.