

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4185
By: Bailes
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that access to alternative forms of medical therapies could aid individuals with certain trauma-induced mental and physical conditions that are nonresponsive to traditional forms of treatment and therapy. Specifically, individuals with stress- and trauma-related mental health conditions stemming from neuroinflammation are unable to access quality, effective treatments for these conditions. Neuroinflammation can lead to the development of debilitating neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative conditions in addition to decreasing overall quality of life. H.B. 4185 seeks to address this issue by requiring the Health and Human Services Commission to establish a pilot program to award grants for personalized treatment protocols for certain veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and/or Traumatic Brain Injury.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 4185 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), using available resources and in cooperation with a nonprofit veterans organization, to establish and operate a pilot program to award grants for the provision of a personalized treatment protocol to at least 250 veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, including treatment-resistant post-traumatic stress disorder, and/or Traumatic Brain Injury. The bill requires the personalized treatment protocol provided under the pilot program to be administered at the veteran's home and designed to reduce neuroinflammation and replenish deficient or insufficient brain chemistry to an optimal level.

H.B. 4185 authorizes HHSC to award a grant under the pilot program only in accordance with a contract between HHSC and the grant recipient. The bill requires the contract to include provisions under which HHSC is granted sufficient control to ensure that the public purpose of providing treatment to veterans is accomplished and that the state receives the return benefit. The bill authorizes HHSC to accept gifts, grants, and donations to operate the program.

H.B. 4185 requires the executive commissioner of HHSC to adopt rules to implement the pilot program and for HHSC to establish and begin operating the program as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date. The bill requires HHSC not later than October 1, 2028, to prepare and submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and

appropriate standing committees of the legislature a report that includes information on the number of veterans who were provided a personalized treatment protocol under the program and an evaluation of the program's effectiveness. The pilot program concludes, and the bill's provisions expire, September 1, 2029.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.