

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R13379 LRM-D

H.B. 4421
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Veteran Affairs
5/15/2023
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Legislative Medal of Honor (medal) is the highest state military award available to those who served, were born in or died in Texas, or were a Texas resident at time of entrance into military service. However, current legislation regarding the medal fails to recognize those in service before, on, and after September 11, 2001. H.B. 4421 seeks to address this issue by amending the qualifications for and limitations on awarding the medal.

H.B. 4421 amends the Government Code to require the medal to be awarded to a Texas resident who receives the Congressional Medal of Honor, and excludes such an award from the limitation on the number of medals that the legislature may direct the governor to award during a regular legislative session. The bill revises the two periods of applicable service for which the legislature may each direct one medal to be awarded as follows:

- changes the first period for which one medal may be awarded from the period beginning after 1835 but before 1956 to the period beginning after 1835 but before September 11, 2001; and
- changes the second award period from the period after 1955 to the period on or after September 11, 2001.

H.B. 4421 amends current law relating to qualifications for and limitations on awarding the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 437.351, Government Code, by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (e), as follows:

(d) Provides that the legislature is authorized to direct the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor (medal) to be awarded only during a regular session and is prohibited from, during a regular session, directing the medal to be awarded to more than one service member for service in the state or federal military forces during the period beginning after 1835 but before September 11, 2001, rather than before 1956, and one service member for service in the state or federal military forces on or after September 11, 2001, rather than after 1955.

(e) Requires that the medal, notwithstanding Subsections (a) (relating to requiring that the medal be awarded to a member of the state or federal military forces designated by concurrent resolution of the legislature who voluntarily performs a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice involving risk of life that is so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the service member for gallantry and intrepidity above the service member's comrades) and (c) (relating to requiring a service member, to receive the medal, to be nominated during a regular session of the legislature by majority vote of all the members of a nominating committee consisting of certain government officials), be awarded to a

resident of this state who receives the Congressional Medal of Honor. Provides that a medal awarded under this subsection is not included for purposes of determining the number of medals that are authorized to be awarded under Subsection (d).

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2023.