

## **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.