

By: Lopez of Bexar

H.B. No. 2148

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a study on veteran deaths caused by suicide.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. (a) In this section:

(1) "Commission" means the Texas Veterans Commission.

(2) "Veteran" has the meaning assigned by Section [2308.251](#), Government Code.

(b) The commission shall conduct a study to evaluate veteran deaths in this state caused by suicide in the preceding five years.

The report must include, if available:

(1) the total number of veterans whose death was caused by suicide in the preceding five years;

(2) a summary of the age, gender, and race of each veteran described by Subdivision (1) of this subsection;

(3) a comprehensive list of the medications prescribed to or controlled substances present in the body of each veteran described by Subdivision (1) of this subsection at the time of the veteran's death, as applicable, including any medication that:

(A) was labeled with a warning box included in the prescribing information due to the drug's serious or life-threatening side effects or risks;

(B) was taken for a purpose inconsistent with the United States Food and Drug Administration's approved use of the medication;

1 (C) was a psychotropic; or

2 (D) was labeled with a warning regarding the risk
3 of developing suicidal ideation;

4 (4) a summary of medical diagnoses for veterans by
5 physicians employed by the United States Department of Veterans
6 Affairs that led to the physicians prescribing the medications
7 described by Subdivision (3) of this subsection;

8 (5) the number of instances during which a veteran
9 whose death was caused by suicide was on multiple medications
10 prescribed by a physician employed by the United States Department
11 of Veterans Affairs;

12 (6) the percentage of veterans described by
13 Subdivision (1) of this subsection who were not taking any
14 medication prescribed by a physician employed by the United States
15 Department of Veterans Affairs;

16 (7) the percentage of veterans described by
17 Subdivision (1) of this subsection with combat experience or who
18 experienced trauma, including military sexual trauma, traumatic
19 brain injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder;

20 (8) each Veterans Health Administration facility with
21 a notably high percentage of prescriptions per facility patient or
22 of suicide rates among patients treated at the facility;

23 (9) a description of United States Department of
24 Veterans Affairs policies governing the prescribing of medications
25 described by Subdivision (3) of this subsection;

26 (10) any patterns apparent to the commission based on
27 the review; and

1 (11) recommendations for further action that would
2 improve the safety and well-being of veterans.

3 (c) The commission may collaborate with any state or federal
4 agency as necessary to obtain the information described by
5 Subsection (b) of this section.

6 (d) Not later than March 1, 2025, the commission shall
7 prepare and submit to the governor and legislature and post on the
8 commission's Internet website a report containing the results of
9 the study and any recommendations for legislative or other action.

10 SECTION 2. This Act expires September 1, 2025.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.