

By: Hughes

S.B. No. 493

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to qualifications for certain individuals for veterans benefits.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.029 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.029. CERTAIN VETERANS QUALIFIED FOR BENEFITS. (a) In this section, "COVID-19" means the 2019 novel coronavirus disease.

(b) For purposes of determining qualifications for any veterans benefits or services from the state, a former member of the United States armed forces who received a less than honorable discharge due to the individual's refusal to receive a vaccination against COVID-19 shall be considered to have received an honorable discharge.

(c) For a discharge of a former member of the United States armed forces to be considered honorable under Subsection (b), the former member of the United States armed forces must prove to the Texas Veterans Commission that the individual's refusal to receive a vaccination against COVID-19 was the sole reason for the individual's less than honorable discharge.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this

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1 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

2 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.