

MINUTES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON VETERAN AFFAIRS

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

9:00 AM

Capitol Extension, Room E1.016

Pursuant to a notice posted in accordance with Senate Rule 11.10 and 11.18, a public hearing of the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs was held on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, in the Capitol Extension, Room E1.016, at Austin, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Kelly Hancock, Chair
Senator Tan Parker, Vice Chair
Senator César Blanco
Senator Roland Gutierrez
Senator Bob Hall
Senator Kevin Sparks

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Sarah Eckhardt

The chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. There being a quorum present, the following business was transacted:

The committee heard invited testimony on the following interim charges:

- **Veteran Mental Health:** Review current programs that provide direct and indirect mental health services to veterans in Texas. Identify barriers to accessing mental health resources for rural veterans. Make recommendations to improve access to mental health support for all veterans.
- **Support Service Database for Texas Veterans:** Review and report on the progress toward the creation of a single database to facilitate the seamless provision of veteran benefits by state agencies. Make recommendations to improve coordination among state, federal, and local agencies and others that provide benefits to veterans.
- **Strengthen Support for Veteran Housing:** Study the accessibility and affordability of veteran housing. Identify factors that contribute to veteran homelessness. Determine

whether the Veterans Land Board has the tools necessary to maximize their assistance to eligible borrowers in home lending. Make recommendations to update state standards related to veteran home loans and housing.

All witnesses are shown on the attached list.

There being no further business, at 10:43 AM, Senator Hancock moved that the committee stand recessed subject to the call of the chair. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Kelly Hancock, Chair

Kennedy Calvo, Clerk