

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Defense & Veterans' Affairs
For HB 5229

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Hearing Date: April 13, 2023 10:30 AM - or upon final adjourn./recess or bill referral if permission granted

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Texas Council of Chapters, Military Officers Association of America and self - Retired, Volunteer Peer Specialist
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On behalf of myself and the members of the Texas Council of Chapters, Military Officers Association of America, I am offering our strong support for this bill. According to the Texas Coordinating Council of Veterans Services Employment Group (page 18, October 1, 2022) - "The 84th Texas Legislature passed SB 805 establishing state agencies to have a goal of 20% of their workforce comprised of U.S. Military Veterans. SB 389 also was passed by the 84th Texas Legislature that listed military occupational specialty codes on certain state agency employment openings. State agencies have made limited progress in reaching the 20% goal set forth by the Texas Legislature. According to the 2022 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Quarter Veteran Workforce Summary Reports, the percentage of veterans employed by the State of Texas is 6.03% 1st QTR 2022, 5.98% 2nd QTR 2022, and 5.94% 3rd QTR 2022. The State of Texas is well short of the goal of 20%." Roughly 20,000 service-members retire or are discharged in Texas every year. Many are highly skilled in many of the shortage occupations that are the backbone of the Texas economy and that state agencies routinely need - like cyber security, IT, personnel management, law enforcement, and maintenance workers, to name a few. Military spouses are also highly skilled yet underemployed or unemployed. It is our belief that this bill, if passed this session, can give Texas agencies the encouragement they need to meet the existing Legislative intent to have 20% of state agency positions filled by eligible and qualified members of the military community.