

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1580
By: Blanco
Public Health
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill sponsor has informed the committee that local mental health authorities (LMHAs) provide essential mental health services to communities across Texas, including specialized care for individuals experiencing PTSD, depression, and anxiety, and the governing bodies of LMHAs oversee the administration and effectiveness of these services, ensuring they meet the needs of the populations they serve. The bill sponsor has further informed the committee that although LMHAs address a broad spectrum of mental health concerns, there is a critical need for stronger representation of veterans. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2024 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, the unadjusted suicide rate in 2022 among veterans was 34.7 per 100,000, more than double the 17.1 per 100,000 rate for nonveteran U.S. adults, with an average of 17.6 veteran suicides per day that year.

Under current law, the only required member of an LMHA's governing body is the county sheriff, who serves as a nonvoting ex officio member. Not having a veteran on these governing bodies leaves a gap in the decision-making process regarding veteran-specific mental health needs. S.B. 1580 seeks to enhance the ability of LMHAs to provide targeted, effective mental health care for those who have served in the military by requiring LMHA governing bodies to include a veteran selected by the governing body's members.

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. 1580 amends the Health and Safety Code to require the composition of the governing body of a local mental health authority that has a governing body to include a veteran selected by a majority of the governing body members. The bill requires the members of each local mental health authority governing body to select a veteran to serve on the governing body not later than December 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.