

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 2543
By: Hancock
Veteran Affairs
8/20/2025
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 2001, the Texas Legislature established the Texas State Veteran Cemetery Committee to oversee the development of state veterans cemeteries. The committee consists of the three members of the Veterans Land Board (VLB), the chair of the Texas Veterans Commission, and two representatives from the state's veteran community. Notably, the committee was created before the first Texas State Veterans Cemetery was even established.

Under the Texas Natural Resources Code, the committee is responsible for setting guidelines on the location, size, and eligibility requirements for Texas State Veterans Cemeteries. It may select up to seven sites, with selection criteria based on factors such as land donations, operational funding, federal grants, and grant funding requirements.

Today, Texas is home to 1.5 million veterans, and the state's veteran population continues to grow. To ensure every veteran has reasonable access to a state cemetery, there is increasing demand to establish additional locations. S.B. 2543 provides the committee with the flexibility to expand the cemetery system, allowing more families to honor their loved ones who dedicated their lives to serving our country.

S.B. 2543 amends current law relating to the amount of certain revenue that may be used for and the location of state veterans cemeteries.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 164.005(f) and (h), Natural Resources Code, as follows:

(f) Requires the Veterans Land Board (VLB), the chairman of the Texas Veterans Commission (chairman), and two representatives of the veterans community selected by the chairman to:

(1) establish the guidelines for determining certain criteria, including the location and size of state veterans cemeteries that are funded by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, rather than the location and size of veterans cemeteries; and

(2) select locations across the state for state veterans cemeteries that are funded by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, rather than select up to seven locations across the state for veterans cemeteries.

(h) Authorizes VLB to use funds available in the veterans' land fund, the veterans' housing assistance fund, and the veterans' housing assistance fund II that are authorized to be used for state veterans cemeteries that are funded by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs to plan and design, operate, maintain, enlarge, or improve state veterans cemeteries that are funded by a grant from the United States

Department of Veterans Affairs. Deletes existing text providing that, of the funds available in certain funds assisting veterans that are authorized to be used for veterans cemeteries, VLB is authorized to spend not more than \$7 million each fiscal year to plan and design, operate, maintain, enlarge, or improve veterans cemeteries.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2025.