

1-1 By: Harris, et al. (Senate Sponsor - Middleton) H.B. No. 1397  
1-2 (In the Senate - Received from the House April 30, 2025;  
1-3 May 1, 2025, read first time and referred to Committee on Economic  
1-4 Development; May 14, 2025, reported adversely, with favorable  
1-5 Committee Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 4, Nays 1;  
1-6 May 14, 2025, sent to printer.)

1-7	COMMITTEE VOTE				
1-8		Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-9	King	X			
1-10	Sparks	X			
1-11	Alvarado	X			
1-12	Johnson		X		
1-13	Schwertner	X			

1-14 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR H.B. No. 1397 By: Sparks

1-15 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
1-16 AN ACT

1-17 relating to the care, custody, and display of the letter known as  
1-18 the victory or death letter, the Texas Constitution, and the Texas  
1-19 Declaration of Independence.

1-20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:  
1-21 SECTION 1. Subchapter L, Chapter 441, Government Code, is  
1-22 amended by adding Section 441.207 to read as follows:

1-23 Sec. 441.207. CARE, CUSTODY, AND DISPLAY OF VICTORY OR  
1-24 DEATH LETTER, TEXAS CONSTITUTION, AND TEXAS DECLARATION OF  
1-25 INDEPENDENCE. (a) In this section, "victory or death letter" means  
1-26 the letter written by Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis dated  
1-27 February 24, 1836, and signed "Victory or Death."

1-28 (b) The commission is responsible for the care and custody  
1-29 of the victory or death letter, the Texas Constitution, and the  
1-30 Texas Declaration of Independence. The commission is responsible  
1-31 for the safety and preservation of the victory or death letter at  
1-32 all times, including when the letter is in the direct custody of the  
1-33 commission, in storage, or on display in the Alamo complex, Capitol  
1-34 Complex, or another site the commission determines appropriate  
1-35 under Subsection (f).

1-36 (c) The commission shall:

1-37 (1) designate an appropriate place in the Alamo  
1-38 complex for the secure display of the victory or death letter; and

1-39 (2) on the Texas Historical Commission's determination  
1-40 that the transfer to and display of the letter at the Alamo complex  
1-41 is safe and appropriate, transfer the letter to that location for  
1-42 display.

1-43 (d) Until the commission designates an appropriate place in  
1-44 the Alamo complex to display the victory or death letter and in  
1-45 collaboration with the Texas Historical Commission determines an  
1-46 appropriate time to securely transfer the letter to that place, the  
1-47 commission shall display the victory or death letter in the public  
1-48 location at the Capitol Complex at which the Texas Constitution and  
1-49 the Texas Declaration of Independence are displayed as required by  
1-50 Subsection (e).

1-51 (e) The commission shall collaborate with the Texas  
1-52 Historical Commission and State Preservation Board to determine an  
1-53 appropriate public location at the Capitol Complex for the secure  
1-54 display of the Texas Constitution and the Texas Declaration of  
1-55 Independence.

1-56 (e-1) The commission, in consultation and collaboration  
1-57 with the Texas Historical Commission and the State Preservation  
1-58 Board and not later than December 1, 2027, shall:

1-59 (1) develop a plan to display:

1-60 (A) the Texas Declaration of Independence and the

Texas Constitution in the Capitol Complex; and  
(B) the victory or death letter in the Alamo  
complex and other sites the commission determines appropriate under  
Subsection (f);  
(2) publish the plan on the commission's Internet  
website; and  
(3) provide a copy of the plan to the standing  
committees of the legislature with jurisdiction over the state's  
historical resources.  
(e-2) Subsection (e-1) and this subsection expire September  
1, 2031.  
(f) The commission, in consultation and collaboration with  
the Texas Historical Commission and the State Preservation Board,  
may authorize for a limited period the display of the Texas  
Constitution, the Texas Declaration of Independence, or the victory  
or death letter at a museum, historical event, or historical site.  
(g) Costs attributable to the display of the victory or  
death letter, the Texas Constitution, and the Texas Declaration of  
Independence shall be paid by the commission, using money available  
to the commission for that purpose.  
 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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