

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3426
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Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

There are concerns about the public accessibility of certain personal information relating to veterans and active military service members that is received or maintained by the Veterans' Land Board (VLB). C.S.H.B. 3426 seeks to address these concerns by establishing the confidentiality of certain information relating to veterans and active military service members and providing for the authorized disclosure of this information by the VLB.

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

C.S.H.B. 3426 amends the Natural Resources Code to establish that the following information received or maintained by the Veterans' Land Board (VLB) that relates to a veteran or veteran's family member who applies for or receives benefits or services offered by the VLB or to a current member of the U.S. armed forces or Texas military forces is confidential and not subject to disclosure under state public information law:

- name;
- home address;
- telephone number;
- email address;
- emergency contact information;
- social security number; or
- any other information that reveals whether the person has family members.

C.S.H.B. 3426 sets out the limited circumstances under which the VLB may disclose this information to certain governmental entities, private vendors, and certain persons with written consent, but establishes that the disclosed information is not subject to disclosure under state public information law and that the disclosure does not constitute a voluntary disclosure to the public by the VLB under that law. To the extent of any conflict with state public information law relating to the confidentiality of certain email addresses, the bill's provisions prevail.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3426 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute changes the original's authorization for limited disclosure of the applicable information to certain entities by providing for that disclosure to political subdivisions of the state, rather than to a city or county, as in the original. The substitute includes a specification not in the original's authorization for limited disclosure of the information to any person with certain written consent that the disclosed information relates to the consenting person.

The substitute includes a provision establishing that the bill's provisions prevail to the extent of any conflict with state public information law relating to the confidentiality of certain email addresses.