

**SUBJECT:** Authorizing the Military Department to purchase food and beverages

**COMMITTEE:** Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — Gutierrez, Blanco, Arévalo, Cain, Flynn, Lambert, Wilson  
0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — None  
Against — None  
On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Tracy Norris, Texas Military Department)

**BACKGROUND:** Government Code, sec 437.118 allows the Texas Military Department to use appropriated money to buy food and beverages for charged military housing and training functions required of the Texas military forces.

**DIGEST:** HB 1606 would authorize the Texas Military Department to use appropriated money to buy food and beverages for members of the Texas military forces on duty and students participating in the Texas ChalleNGe Academy.  
  
The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 1606 would address concerns that the Texas Military Department currently lacks statutory authority to use appropriated funds to purchase food and drinks for Texas military forces on duty and for those participating in the Texas ChalleNGe Academy, a residential military academy for at-risk youth.  
  
For an agency to buy food and beverages for its employees or others, it must have statutory authority. Currently, the Texas Military Department has statutory authority to use appropriated funds to buy food and drinks only for charged military housing and military forces on duty for required

training functions. HB 1606 would expand this authority to include military forces on duty and participants in the Challenge Academy among those for whom the department could use appropriated money to buy food and drinks.

OPPONENTS SAY: No apparent opposition.

NOTES: An identical companion bill, SB 1302 by Lucio, was referred to the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Border Security on March 14.