

**SUBJECT:** Creating the Texas Veterans County Service Officer Task Force

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

**VOTE:** 7 ayes — Flynn, Tinderholt, Ashby, Hinojosa, Lopez, Ramos, Romero

0 nays

2 absent — Lozano, Reynolds

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 17 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

**WITNESSES:** *On House companion bill, HB 3412:*  
For — Jim Brennan, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations; Steven Price, The Voices of Our Veterans, Texas Democratic Veterans;  
(*Registered, but did not testify:* John McKinny, American Legion)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Cruz Montemayor, Texas Veterans Commission; Ender Reed, Harris County Veterans Services Office)

**BACKGROUND:** Interested parties note that many counties find it difficult to provide Veteran County Service Officers (VCSOs), due a lack of funding for this state requirement.

**DIGEST:** SB 2104 would create the Texas Veterans County Service Officer Task Force to study the impact and efficacy of Veteran County Service Officers (VCSOs) in Texas.

**Members.** The task force would be composed of:

- the House Defense and Veterans' Affairs Committee chair;
- the Senate Veteran Affairs and Border Security Committee chair;
- a representative of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC);

- the Veterans County Service Officer Advisory Committee chair;
- a representative of the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations;
- two officers selected by the chair of the House committee, representing counties with a population of less than 200,000 people and more than 200,000 people, respectively; and
- two officers selected by the chair of the Senate committee, representing counties with a population of less than 200,000 people and more than 200,000 people, respectively.

The chairs of the House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs and the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Border Security would serve as co-chairs of the task force.

**Duties.** The task force would have to:

- examine the role and duties of VCSOs in each county;
- identify the regions of Texas in need of VCSOs; and
- determine types and levels of support needed from the state for VCSOs to appropriately advocate for veterans.

Each recommendation made by the task force would have to be approved by a majority vote of its members.

**Report.** TVC would have to submit a report based on the task force's recommendations to the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Border Security and the House Committee on Defense and Veterans' Affairs by December 1, 2020. The report would have to be approved by a majority vote of the task force's members.

**Effective date.** The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.