

SUBJECT: Establishing a veterans-related training program for county jailers

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Neave Criado, Stucky, Gerdes, J. Jones, Rosenthal, Schatzline
2 nays — Slaton, Tinderholt
1 absent — Orr

WITNESSES: For — Mitch Fuller, Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Texas
(*Registered, but did not testify*: Lauren Johnson, ACLU of Texas; Jim Brennan, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations; Cynthia Van Maanen, Travis County Democratic Party; Muneeb “Meebs” Aslam; Susana Carranza; Thomas Parkinson; Maria Person)

Against — None

On — Brandon Wood, Commission on Jail Standards; Brian Hawthorne, Sheriffs Association of Texas; Dr. Blake Harris, Texas Veteran's Commission (*Registered, but did not testify*: Buddy Mills, Sheriffs' Association of Texas)

BACKGROUND: Some have suggested that encouraging jailers to understand the unique needs, medical characteristics, and military culture of the veteran population could improve outcomes and create safer jail environments for incarcerated veterans.

DIGEST: CSHB 1282 would require the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement to, in consultation with the Texas Veterans Commission, develop a training program for county jailers on interacting with veterans in the criminal justice system.

A person could not be appointed as a county jailer, except on a temporary basis, unless the person had satisfactorily completed the established training program. A county jailer who, on the effective date of the bill,

held a county jailer license would be required to complete the new training program by August 31, 2025.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023, and would apply to any licensed county jailer, regardless of when their license was issued.