

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.C.R. 138  
By: Martinez (Hinojosa)  
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations  
5/18/2005  
Engrossed

### **AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Veterans who live in South Texas have served their country bravely and risked their lives to preserve our country's freedom and democracy, and their sacrifices in our behalf are deserving of a veterans hospital to meet their health care needs.

Regrettably, South Texas currently lacks adequate health care resources for these proud men and women; the sole outpatient clinic in the eight-county area at the southern tip of Texas has limited hours of operation and must refer patients to other facilities for special tests or treatments; in addition, the nearest veterans hospital to the region with inpatient acute medical and surgical care and extended care is more than 250 miles away in San Antonio.

Veterans in Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, and Willacy counties alone number greater than 46,000, and a May 2004 report by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) acknowledged the need for improved and expanded medical facilities for veterans in South Texas. Despite this assessment, however, the DVA has planned only the addition of 10 contract beds in Harlingen's Valley Baptist Medical Center.

Weslaco is located in the center of the Rio Grande Valley, less than one hour's drive from McAllen, Harlingen, and Brownsville, making it a convenient site for a hospital to serve the area's veterans.

### **RESOLVED**

That the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas respectfully urge the Congress of the United States and the Department of Veterans Affairs to fulfill the DVA's goal of providing excellence in patient care by building a veterans hospital in Weslaco, Texas, to serve the more than 46,000 veterans in South Texas who have bravely defended and served our country.

That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, to the secretary of veterans affairs, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.