

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
81R9547 MCK-D

S.B. 1463  
By: Lucio  
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations  
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As Filed

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

Currently, there is a lack of outreach to Texas servicemembers and their families regarding possible services and benefits for which they may be eligible. Other than the Health and Human Services Commission inquiring in its forms for services whether a person is a veteran, and if so identified, referring them to veterans services, there is insufficient outreach, particularly on the Texas Information and Referral Network.

As proposed, S.B. 1463 directs the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to participate in the transition assistance program conducted by the United States Department of Defense and distribute health benefits application forms and answer health care and other benefits-related questions. This bill also requires that benefits information be disseminated through the Texas Information and Referral Network and outlines what the information is required to include. S.B. 1463 also directs TVC to cooperate in preparing and maintaining information on the Texas Information and Referral Network.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, by adding Section 434.019, as follows:

Sec. 434.019. INFORMATION ABOUT VETERANS BENEFITS. Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to attend each transition assistance program conducted by the United States Department of Defense in the state. Requires TVC, at each transition assistance program, to distribute the application for health benefits from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and answer questions regarding health care and other benefits available to veterans of the United States armed forces.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter U, Chapter 161, Health and Safety Code, by adding Section 161.553, as follows:

Sec. 161.553. VETERANS HEALTH CARE BENEFITS. (a) Requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to disseminate through the Texas Information and Referral Network information regarding the health care benefits available to veterans of the United States armed forces through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Requires that the information include the process for applying for health care benefits, including copies of any form necessary to apply for benefits, and contact information for TVC, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and veterans hospitals in the state.

(b) Requires TVC to cooperate with DSHS and HHSC in preparing and maintaining the information that is made available through the Texas Information and Referral Network.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.