

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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Administration
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Combat operations have been ongoing for well over a decade in Afghanistan and Iraq. Although the price to be paid was potentially high, Texas service members and their families volunteered and accepted the great risks. These service members deployed over and over again, many deploying eight or more times.

Our nation experienced 6,839 fallen heroes paying the ultimate price in these combat operations, with 596 of these being Texans. Many more Texans have permanent physical injuries. Often overlooked is the price paid by their families. These service members' families suffered the unknown on a daily basis and their children lacked the love and guidance of the deployed parent. These spouses left behind will have to learn to deal with the permanent absence of their service member, and their children will have to embrace life without the love and guidance of one parent.

Our Texas military service members and their families deserve timely recognition for their great sacrifices voluntarily provided after the September 11 attacks, in the form of a monument in proximity to the Capitol.

Under Chapter 443, Government Code, and rules of the State Preservation Board, a portion of the north Capitol grounds is available for new monuments, subject to legislative approval, specified procedural requirements, the provision of funding from private donors, conformity to certain size and design limitations and parameters, and completion on a timely basis.

Members of the House of Representatives and Senate find that a commemorative structure in honor of Texans who served in Afghanistan and Iraq and their families would be a worthy addition to the Capitol grounds to convey to visitors a sense of history and utmost respect for those who have seen combat and otherwise demonstrated patriotic commitment in our behalf.

Our nation is fortunate to have sons and daughters whose love of country is such that they are willing to risk their lives in its defense, and they are truly deserving of the utmost respect and gratitude. Legions of Americans stepped forward to serve their nation in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, and their unwavering resolve to combat terrorism in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan helped ensure the safety of millions of people back home and around the globe. Over the course of both wars, almost 7,000 U.S. service members, including 600 Texans, died, and countless more American troops were wounded; sharing in those sacrifices were their families and friends. Under Chapter 443 (State Preservation Board), Government Code, and rules of the State Preservation Board, a portion of the north Capitol grounds is available for new monuments, subject to legislative approval, specified procedural requirements, the provision of funding from private donors, conformity to certain size and design limitations and parameters, and completion on a timely basis.

Members of the Texas Legislature find that a commemorative monument recognizing those Texans who served during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan would be a worthy addition to the Capitol grounds

RESOLVED

That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby authorize the State Preservation Board, subject to state law and rules of the board, to approve and permit the construction of a monument at the state Capitol Complex, at a site outside the historic Capitol grounds, honoring Texans who served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as part of the U.S. armed forces and their families.

That the Texas secretary of state forward an official copy of this resolution to the executive director of the State Preservation Board.