

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1879
By: Zaffirini
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties note that the purpose of the fund for veterans' assistance is to provide grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations to enhance or improve veterans' assistance programs. The parties further note that the Texas Veterans Commission awards grants on a competitive basis to local governments and nonprofit organizations; however, the commission is not required to perform a needs-based assessment before awarding the grants. The parties suggest that a needs-based assessment would allow the commission to direct its limited resources to veterans with high-priority needs. S.B. 1879 seeks to help prioritize the granting of funds to entities assisting those veterans.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1879 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Veterans Commission, every four years, to conduct a needs assessment to identify the specific high-priority needs of veterans and the services available to address those needs, to determine the grant categories that correspond to the identified needs, and to identify any discrepancy between the identified needs and the services available to address those needs. The bill requires the commission, on completion of the needs assessment and other determinations, to incorporate the results of the assessment and determinations into its process for awarding grants from the fund for veterans' assistance. The bill requires the commission, not later than June 1, 2016, to conduct the initial needs assessment, make determinations, and so incorporate the results of the assessment and determinations.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.