

SUBJECT: Facilitating veteran, active duty apprenticeship training program grants

COMMITTEE: Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Raymond, Buckley, Cyrier, Lambert, Lopez, E. Morales

2 nays — Biedermann, Tinderholt

1 absent — Gervin-Hawkins

WITNESSES: For — David Lopez, IUEC Local 21; Ronnie Smitherman, Texas Building and Construction Trades Council; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Steven Albright, Associated General Contractors of Texas Highway Heavy Utility and Industrial Branch; Dana Harris, Austin Chamber of Commerce; Mitch Fuller, Texas VFW; Daniel Womack, Dow Inc.; Daniel Collins, El Paso County; Traci Berry, Goodwill Central Texas; John McCord, NFIB; Rene Lara, Texas AFL-CIO; J.D. Hale, Texas Association of Builders; Lori Henning, Texas Association of Goodwills; Mike Meroney, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Juan Ayala, Texas Mayors of Military Communities; Julie Wheeler, Travis County Commissioners Court; Molly Weiner, United Ways of Texas)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 133.001(1) defines an “apprenticeship training program” as a training program that provides on-the-job training, preparatory instruction, supplementary instruction, or related instruction in a trade that has been certified as an apprenticesable occupation by the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Interested parties have noted that the Texas Workforce Commission has had success through collaborations with community and technical colleges in providing occupational training to veterans, and the state should provide more incentives for nonprofit organizations to facilitate veteran and active duty military participation in apprenticeship training programs.

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DIGEST: HB 1884 would require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to develop and administer a program under which the commission could award grants to one or more nonprofit organizations that facilitated the participation in apprenticeship training programs of veterans and active duty military service members who were transitioning into civilian employment. The bill would assign “apprenticeship training program” the definition specified in Education Code sec. 133.001(1).

A grant under the program could be used only to recruit or assist veterans or active duty military service members transitioning into civilian employment to participate in an apprenticeship training program in Texas.

As soon as practicable after the bill’s effective date, TWC would have to adopt rules for the administration of the bill’s provisions, including rules for verifying that state funds awarded to a nonprofit organization were being used appropriately.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have an estimated negative impact of \$600,000 to general revenue through fiscal 2023.