

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R9538 MCK-D

H.B. 2217
By: Flores et al. (Hinojosa)
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
5/4/2009
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) finalized contracts with Valley Baptist Health System in Cameron County and with South Texas Health System in Hidalgo County to provide inpatient, surgical, emergency, and mental health services to veterans enrolled in the VA benefits program. However, there is still a need for a full-fledged veterans hospital. The nearest hospital is approximately 300 miles away in San Antonio, which is prohibitive for some patients.

H.B. 2217 requires the Texas Veterans Commission and the Department of State Health Services to work with appropriate federal agencies to establish a veterans hospital in the Rio Grande Valley region of Texas. The bill authorizes the state to contribute money, property, and other resources to the establishment, maintenance, and operation of the veterans hospital.

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. VETERANS HOSPITAL. (a) Requires the Texas Veterans Commission and the Department of State Health Services to work with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and any other appropriate federal agency to propose that the federal government establish a veterans hospital in the Rio Grande Valley region of the state.

(b) Authorizes the state to contribute money, property, and other resources to the establishment, maintenance, and operation of a veterans hospital described by this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.