

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
84R20013 YDB-D

C.S.S.B. 1879
By: Zaffirini
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
4/1/2015
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this legislation is to ensure the allocation of resources toward the highest priority needs of veterans.

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) awards grants on a competitive basis to local governments and nonprofit organizations after grant applicants are reviewed by TVC agency staff and an advisory committee. TVC's grant application reviews include agency staff evaluations and advisory committee grant funding recommendations. TVC, however, does not regularly conduct statewide needs assessments to guide its allocation of grants. The lack of periodic needs assessments prevents TVC from targeting its resources to effectively address the high-priority needs of veterans, which could include mental or physical health challenges.

C.S.S.B. 1879 would direct TVC to conduct periodic needs assessments to identify the specific high-priority needs of veterans and the services available to address those needs. This bill also would require TVC to incorporate the results of this needs assessment in its process of awarding grants from existing funds. These changes would enhance TVC's ability to direct its resources toward addressing the highest priority needs of veterans.

C.S.S.B. 1879 amends current law relating to the allocation of certain grants from the fund for veterans' assistance.

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 Section 434.017, Government Code, by adding Subsections (c-1) and (c-2), as follows:

(c-1) Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), every four years, to:

- (1) conduct a needs assessment to identify the specific high-priority needs of veterans and the services available to address those needs;
- (2) determine the grant categories that correspond to the needs identified under Subdivision (1); and
- (3) identify any discrepancy between the needs identified under Subdivision (1) and the services available to address those needs.

(c-2) Requires TVC, on completion of the needs assessment and other determinations under Subsection (c-1), to incorporate the results of the assessment and determinations into TVC's process for awarding grants from the fund for veterans' assistance.

SECTION 2. Requires TVC, not later than June 1, 2016, to conduct the initial needs assessment, make determinations, and incorporate the results of the assessment and determinations as required by Sections 434.017(c-1) and (c-2), Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2015.