

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
85R13358 CJC-D

S.B. 1679  
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Veteran Affairs & Border Security  
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As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Veterans county service officers (VCSOs) serve as a point of contact for many veterans throughout this state. Unfortunately, VCSOs are an unfunded mandate, and the state does not provide any funding for these offices that are located in counties of a population of more than 200,000.

As stated in the Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations (VAMI) report, "Each office operates differently based off of need and resources available. The only state funding allocated for VCSOs is provided for covering the cost of one of the TVC training conferences VCSOs are required to attend. All operating costs are at the expense of the county, and due to this, many offices have few resources or personnel available to meet the numerous and varied needs of the veterans they work so hard serve." As a result, counties pay all other expenses incurred by the veterans county service office.

S.B. 1679 supports VCSOs efforts to assist veterans by providing a source of direct funding for the VCSOs. By allowing a certain amount of money to be appropriated to the VCSOs, they can expand and increase the quality of service and efficiently tend to the needs of the veterans they help every day.

As proposed, S.B. 1679 amends current law relating to the use of the fund for veterans' assistance to support veterans county service offices.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Veterans Commission in SECTION 1 (Section 434.017, Government Code) and SECTION 2 (Section 434.0321, Government Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 434.017(c) and (d), Government Code, as follows:

(c) Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) to use 30 percent of the money appropriated to TVC under this subsection to provide annual support payments to counties that maintain a veterans county service office as authorized under Section 434.0321. Requires that the remainder of the money appropriated under this subsection be used to make grants to address veterans' needs, administer the fund, and analyze and investigate certain data.

(d) Requires TVC to adopt rules governing the support payments required under Subsection (c).

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 434, Government Code, by adding Section 434.0321, as follows:

Sec. 434.0321. SUPPORT FROM COMMISSION. (a) Provides that a county that maintains an office as provided by Section 434.032 (Creation) is entitled to an annual support payment from TVC.

(b) Authorizes a support payment under Subsection (a) to be used by the county only to fund the office maintained by that county, pay costs related to the operation and administration of programs offered by the office in that county, and pay the salary of the county's officer and, if applicable, the salary of an assistant officer.

(c) Requires TVC by rule to determine the time and manner in which the support payments required under this section are made to the counties entitled to payment. Requires TVC's rules to require the amount of the support payment received by a county to be commensurate with the number of veterans that the county's office serves.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.