

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 886
By: Blanco
Defense & Veterans' Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A recent report published by the Texas Civil Rights Project has highlighted a longstanding problem for the state in which noncitizen veterans are being deported and alienated from their rightfully earned access to benefits. Noncitizen veterans are often deported over minor encounters with law enforcement, sometimes a result of trauma linked to their service. Currently, active duty members and veterans are typically granted a speedy naturalization process, but many active duty members can face hurdles in receiving that aid since there is no structure in place to help veterans through the process. S.B. 886 seeks to address this issue by tasking the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) with determining the citizenship status of veterans living in Texas and by requiring the TVC to facilitate the naturalization process for identified noncitizen 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. 886 amends the Government Code to require the Texas Veterans Commission, on a veteran's request, to evaluate the veteran's citizenship status in order to educate and direct the veteran in becoming a U.S. citizen and facilitate the veteran's naturalization process.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.