

- SUBJECT:** Licensing military dentists and dental hygienists for charitable work
- COMMITTEE:** Defense and Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Gutierrez, Blanco, Arévalo, Cain, Flynn, Lambert, Wilson
0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Todd Perrin, Greater Killeen Free Clinic; Jody Hopkins, Texas Association of Charitable Clinics; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jim Brennan, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations; James Cunningham, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations, Texas Council of Chapters of the Military Officers Association of America; Jess Calvert, Texas Dental Association; Sacha Jacobson)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Kelly Parker, Texas State Board of Dental Examiners)
- DIGEST:** HB 2007 would require the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners to adopt rules for issuing a limited volunteer license for military dentists and dental hygienists who were licensed and in good standing in another state, authorized to treat military personnel or veterans, and met other board requirements. The license would allow volunteer dentists and hygienists to work without compensation at a clinic that primarily treated indigent patients. License holders would be subject to all dental board rules and requirements, including those regarding disciplinary actions.
- The bill would prohibit the board from issuing a military limited volunteer license to an applicant who:
- held a license that was under active investigation or had been subject to a disciplinary order or denial by another jurisdiction;
 - held a license to prescribe or handle a controlled substance that was under investigation or subject to a disciplinary order or denial by

- another jurisdiction; or
- had been convicted of, was on deferred adjudication community supervision or deferred disposition for, or was under investigation for, a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 2007 would help communities use an existing resource to provide needed dental care to indigent and uninsured Texans. Some parts of the state have significant shortages of qualified dental care providers, and volunteers can play an important role in treating those who have no other access to dental care. The bill would allow military dental professionals who were stationed in Texas but licensed in another state to obtain a limited volunteer license to help treat underserved civilian populations in Texas.

HB 2007 would mirror provisions in current law that allow military medical doctors to provide volunteer charitable services under Occupations Code, sec. 155.103. As with the law for military doctors, dental professionals would be subject to all rules of the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners, including those involving disciplinary actions.

The increased availability of dental care volunteers would allow more of the uninsured population to receive care in clinics, rather than in emergency rooms. Reducing indigent individuals' reliance on emergency rooms would be cost-effective for the state and for hospital systems.

The bill also would foster increased military engagement with surrounding communities. Allowing military dentists and hygienists to serve members of their communities in need could help build positive relations between these groups.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

No apparent opposition.