

SUBJECT: Adjusting requirements for retiring members from the Texas State Guard

COMMITTEE: Defense & Veterans' Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — Wilson, R. Lopez, Bumgarner, Dorazio, Frank, Garcia, Morales Shaw, Muñoz, Slaton

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — Larry Todd, State Guard Association of Texas; Jon Gimble (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jim Brennan, Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations; Mitch Fuller, Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Texas; Dale Laine; Kym Olson)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Government Code sec. 437.309 establishes that the governor or adjutant general, under the governor's authority, is authorized to transfer to the Texas State Guard Honorary Reserve an officer or a guard who meets certain conditions.

DIGEST: HB 836 would require members of the Texas State Guard (TXSG) to be placed on retired status rather than transferred to the TXSG Honorary Reserve and would make conforming language in statute. The bill would also, upon a service member's separation from TXSG:

- allow the commander of TXSG to place a service member on retired status;
- specify that the physical disability of a service member being placed on retired status must be as a result of service;
- remove the requirement that the service member must be 60 years old to be placed on retired status; and
- require that at least five years of the required 20 year combined service minimum be served in TXSG.

The commander of TXSG would be required to issue an identification card to any service member who was placed on retired status.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 836 would eliminate confusion by placing service members on retired status rather than transferring them to the Honorary Reserve. Currently, when the governor activates reserve members to respond to state emergencies or disasters, some members of the Honorary Reserve report for duty. This bill would change the wording in statute to prevent these misunderstandings.

Eliminating age requirements would provide more flexibility for younger service members who have already completed their 20 years of service, which would increase overall retention within TXSG.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

No concerns identified.