

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1202
By: Lucio
Veterans Affairs
4-17-97
As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas is one of the few states that does not provide state cemeteries for veterans. There are a few veterans cemeteries in the state, but a number are closed, and many individual veterans are more than 500 miles from the nearest active cemetery. A profile of Texas developed by the Veterans Administration National Cemetery System concluded in August 1994 that 681,283 Texas veterans were not being served by the existing cemetery system. S.B. 1202 requires the Texas Veterans Commission to determine the need for establishing state cemeteries for veterans.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1202 requires the Texas Veterans Commission to determine the need for establishing state cemeteries for veterans.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 434A, Government Code, by adding Section 434.0076, as follows:

Sec. 434.0076. FINDINGS AND STUDY ABOUT STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES. Provides that the legislature finds that this state is one of the few states that does not provide state cemeteries for veterans. Provides that this legislature also finds that some federal cemeteries for veterans in this state are closed and that many veterans in this state live far from the nearest open veterans cemetery. Provides that it is the intent of this legislature to determine the extent to which there exists in this state the need to provide state cemeteries for veterans. Requires the Texas Veterans Commission (commission) to contract with a qualified consulting firm to study the need and the feasibility of establishing a system of state cemeteries for veterans under the jurisdiction of the commission or of another agency of state government. Sets forth the requirements for this study. Requires the commission to present the written findings of the study to the governor and the presiding officer of each house of the legislature before December 1, 1999. Provides that the commission is required to enter into a contract under this section only if the legislature appropriates money for that purpose. Authorizes the commission to use available resources to conduct its own study of the issue if the legislature does not appropriate money for the contract. Provides that this section expires June 1, 2001.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.