

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
88R2719 JCG-F

H.B. 562  
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Veteran Affairs  
5/4/2023  
Engrossed

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

The mission of the Veterans' Land Board (VLB) is to provide the best package of veterans benefits in the United States, which includes providing low-interest loans to purchase land or homes, low-interest loans for home repairs and eligible improvements, and the management and operation of veterans' cemeteries and nursing homes located throughout Texas. However, under current law, certain sensitive information relating to veterans, active military service members, and their family members that is maintained, created, or received by VLB is at risk of public disclosure.

H.B. 562 seeks to address this issue by establishing the confidentiality of certain information relating to veterans and active military service members while providing for the authorized disclosure of the information by VLB under limited circumstances.

H.B. 562 amends current law relating to the confidentiality of certain information received or maintained by the Veterans' Land Board.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

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

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 161, Natural Resources Code, by adding Section 161.080, as follows:

Sec. 161.080. CONFIDENTIALITY OF CERTAIN INFORMATION. (a) Provides that this section applies only to:

(1) a veteran or a family member of the veteran who applies for or receives any benefits or services offered by the Veterans' Land Board (VLB); or

(2) a current member of:

(A) the armed forces of the United States, including a reserve component; or

(B) the Texas military forces, as that term is defined by Section 437.001 (Definitions), Government Code.

(b) Provides that the following information received or maintained by VLB that relates to a person to whom this section applies, except as provided by Subsection (c), is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code:

(1) name;

- (2) home address;
- (3) telephone number;
- (4) e-mail address;
- (5) emergency contact information;
- (6) social security number; or
- (7) any other information that reveals whether the person has family members.

(c) Authorizes VLB to disclose the information described by Subsection (b) to:

(1) a federal agency, state agency, political subdivision of this state, or private vendor contracted by VLB for the purpose of administering any benefits or services offered by VLB for veterans or the family members of veterans; or

(2) any person with the written consent of a person to whom this section applies if:

(A) the information is disclosed for the purpose specified in the written consent; and

(B) the disclosed information relates to the consenting person.

(d) Provides that the information disclosed under Subsection (c) is not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code, and the disclosure does not constitute a voluntary disclosure to the public by VLB for purposes of Section 552.007 (Voluntary Disclosure of Certain Information When Disclosure Not Required), Government Code.

(e) Provides that, to the extent of any conflict between this section and Section 552.137 (Confidentiality of Certain E-Mail Addresses), Government Code, this section prevails.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.