

By: Lucio

S.B. No. 578

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation by the Texas Veterans Commission of a
veteran suicide prevention action plan.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is
amended by adding Section 434.024 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.024. VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN. (a)
The commission, in collaboration with the United States Department
of Veterans Affairs, veteran advocacy groups, medical providers,
and any other organization or interested party the commission
considers appropriate, shall develop a comprehensive action plan to
increase access to and availability of professional veteran health
services to prevent veteran suicides.

(b) The action plan must:

(1) identify opportunities for raising awareness of
and providing resources for veteran suicide prevention;

(2) identify opportunities to increase access to
veteran mental health services;

(3) identify funding resources to provide accessible,
affordable veteran mental health services;

(4) provide measures to expand public-private
partnerships to ensure access to quality, timely mental health
services; and

(5) provide for proactive outreach measures to reach

1 veterans needing care.

2 (c) The commission shall make specific short-term and
3 long-term statutory, administrative, and budget-related
4 recommendations to the legislature and the governor regarding the
5 policy initiatives and reforms necessary to implement the action
6 plan developed under this section. The short-term recommendations
7 must include a plan for state implementation beginning not later
8 than September 1, 2019. The initiatives and reforms in the
9 short-term plan must be fully implemented by September 1, 2021. The
10 long-term recommendations must include a plan for state
11 implementation beginning not later than September 1, 2021. The
12 initiatives and reforms in the long-term plan must be fully
13 implemented by September 1, 2027.

14 (d) The commission shall include in its strategic plan under
15 Chapter 2056 the plans for implementation of the short-term and
16 long-term recommendations under Subsection (c).

17 (e) This section expires September 1, 2027.

18 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
22 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.