

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the veteran entrepreneur program by the Texas Veterans Commission.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 434, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 434.022 to read as follows:

Sec. 434.022. VETERAN ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "veteran" means a person who has served in:

(1) the army, navy, air force, coast guard, or marine corps of the United States; or

(2) the Texas National Guard as defined by Section 431.001.

(b) The Texas Veterans Commission by rule shall establish and implement the veteran entrepreneur program to foster and promote veteran entrepreneurship and business ownership.

(c) The program shall provide assistance to veteran entrepreneurs and business owners by:

(1) performing outreach functions to improve veteran entrepreneurs' and business owners' awareness of federal and state benefits and services available to those veterans;

(2) assessing the need for benefits and services among veteran entrepreneurs and business owners;

(3) reviewing and researching programs, projects, and initiatives designed to address the needs of veteran entrepreneurs

1 and business owners;

2 (4) periodically evaluating the effectiveness of the
3 commission's efforts to assist veteran entrepreneurs and business
4 owners and making appropriate recommendations to the executive
5 director of the commission to improve services and assistance
6 provided to those veterans;

7 (5) incorporating issues concerning veteran
8 entrepreneurs and business owners into the commission's plans for
9 assisting veterans in securing benefits and services;

10 (6) advocating for veteran entrepreneurs and working
11 to increase public awareness about the needs of veteran
12 entrepreneurs and business owners;

13 (7) recommending legislative initiatives and policies
14 at the local, state, and national levels to address the issues
15 affecting veteran entrepreneurship and business ownership;

16 (8) collaborating with federal, state, and private
17 agencies that provide services to veteran entrepreneurs and
18 business owners to allow the veterans to make use of those services;

19 (9) monitoring and researching issues affecting the
20 interests of veteran entrepreneurs and business owners;

21 (10) providing information about opportunities for
22 veteran entrepreneurs and business owners in the commission's
23 collaborative network of businesses and organizations;

24 (11) providing guidance to veteran entrepreneurs and
25 business owners through conferences, seminars, and training
26 workshops with federal, state, and private agencies; and

27 (12) promoting events and activities that recognize or

1 honor veteran entrepreneurs and business owners.

2 (d) The executive director of the commission shall appoint a
3 program coordinator to administer the program.

4 (e) The commission shall provide facilities as appropriate
5 in support of the program to the extent funding is available for
6 that purpose.

7 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
8 of this Act, but not later than January 1, 2014, the Texas Veterans
9 Commission shall adopt rules establishing the veteran entrepreneur
10 program required by Section 434.022, Government Code, as added by
11 this Act.

12 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1476 passed the Senate on April 18, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 29, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 1476 passed the House on May 15, 2013, by the following vote: Yeas 125, Nays 19, two present not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

Date

Governor