

Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

SB 1712 — Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program

by Senators Burgess and Rodrigues

The bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs (department) to establish and oversee the Veteran Suicide Prevention Training Pilot Program (program). The purpose of the program is to provide veteran suicide prevention training and certification to agency claims examiners and county and city veteran service officers. To provide training curriculum, the department will contract with an organization established in developing and implementing veteran-relevant and evidence-based suicide prevention training.

Training topics include identifying indicators of elevated suicide risk and providing emergency crisis referrals for veterans in emotional or psychological distress.

The bill requires the department to adopt rules, and submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by June 30 of each year. The report will provide information on the pilot program and recommend whether changes should be made to increase effectiveness. In the report to be submitted by June 30, 2026, the department will recommend whether the pilot program should be continued.

A non-recurring appropriation of \$500,000 is provided in the bill.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2022.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 113-0