



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

Texas Veterans Land Board Celebrates 70 Years of Service

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AUSTIN - On Monday, November 7, 2016, Commissioner George P. Bush congratulated the Texas Veterans Land Board (VLB) on 70 years of service to Texas veterans. The 70th anniversary was celebrated with a VLB Inception Day ceremony. VLB Senior Deputy Director Col. (ret.) Matt Elledge and more than 100 employees and guests marked this special day by commemorating the history of the VLB and enjoying refreshments.

"One of the great privileges of serving as Texas Land Commissioner is chairing the Veterans Land Board," Commissioner Bush states. "The men and women of the VLB - many of whom are veterans themselves - continue to serve their fellow veterans through their work. Whether they are manning the statewide Veterans Call Service Center, caring for an elderly veteran in one of our homes, planning an unaccompanied veteran burial or helping a veteran finance his or her first land purchase, these men and women continue to honor the sacrifices of those who have served our country. Today we celebrate 70 years of serving veterans and look forward to the next 70."

Since the days of the Republic, Texas has supported its veterans in appreciation of their military service. In the early days, land was awarded for military service in the Texas Revolution. In 1946, Texas voters approved a constitutional amendment to establish the Texas Veterans Land Board, under the Texas General Land Office, to administer benefits exclusively for Texas veterans returning from World War II. Since then, more than 200,000 VLB loans have been funded for veterans and military members in Texas.

Over the years the VLB has evolved to include seven programs that provide benefits and services for Texas veterans, military members and their families. These programs include: low-interest land, home, and home improvement loans; skilled nursing care in eight Texas State Veterans Homes- with a ninth home planned for Houston; burial services in four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries; the Voices of Veterans oral history program; and veterans benefit information and assistance services through the statewide Veterans Call Service Center, a collaboration between the VLB and the Texas Veterans Commission.

"In 1946, the citizens of Texas chose to honor our veterans for the defense of the freedoms we enjoy here in the United States of America," said Matt Elledge. "We are proud to be a part of the state of Texas tradition that recognizes our veterans and military members for their service. As the VLB moves into the future we hope to inform and educate more veterans about the many benefits they earned while serving our great nation."

The mission of the VLB is to ensure that we offer the very best package of veterans benefits in the country, and those of us who work for the VLB strive to meet those goals every day. For 70 years we have had the honor to serve veterans, military members and their families in Texas, and we look forward to keeping that promise in the years to come.

For more information about the benefits and services available to veterans in Texas, visit www.TexasVeterans.com or call 1-800-252-VETS (8387) or listen to "The Dog Tag," a podcast for veterans by veterans, at www.TexasVeteransBlog.com/DogTag. If you would like to read more about the history of the Texas Veterans Land Board visit the www.TexasVeteransBlog.com.

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