



GOLDIE VANZANDT URGES YOU TO VOTE NO

SB 6: Bad For Veterans

Committee Members,

My name is Goldie VanZandt and I am writing to urge you to vote NO on Senate Bill 6. **My husband and I are both veterans of the United States Navy.** We have dedicated our lives to service, and built a family rooted in love and respect. My husband is not a criminal. He is a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Nevertheless, my family's life has been forever changed by his incarceration in Harris County Jail due to his mental illness and high bond.

I am a Veteran. I served honorably in the United States Navy active for 5 years and 1 year of Reserve Service. My spouse served 20 years in the Navy. He is an honorable retired 70% disabled veteran. **He is a Conservative Republican and I am a Democrat. We believe in bipartisanship and country over party.** My husband spent 9 months in the Harris County Jail for substance use, a way of self-medicating his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The Texas legal system treats our veterans as hardened criminals; most are not, but suffer from mental health issues which are treatable. The \$100,000 bond that our county set was unreasonable, very high and not valid. Because our family could not afford to pay his bond, Jerome sat in jail for almost 9 months, unable to access inpatient treatment with the VA.

After his many sacrifices -- serving during wartime, sleepless nights, missing the birth of our kids, anniversaries, birthdays, school plays, graduations, and separation from the family that he loves and holds dear -- we get a "Thank you for your service!" Well, NO, that's not enough. I wish that this country would stop thanking veterans for our service, and truly show some thanks by voting NO on this bill that would make it harder for families like ours."

Sincerely,

Goldie VanZandt
Proud Grandmother, US Navy Veteran



SB 6 At a Glance

- SB 6 would require more Texans to make a monetary payment to purchase their freedom from jail.

My husband and I own our own home. He has insurance and we have been gainfully employed our entire lives, in service and out. Despite our lifetime of service and hard work, our middle class family was still unable to afford my husband's bond.

- SB 6 is bad for veterans with mental illness and could conflict with Tex. Code Crim. Proc. 17.032, which permits a release on personal bond for certain alleged offenders with MI or IDD.

41% of veterans have a need for mental healthcare.



Existing bail law in Texas is restrictive and punitive enough. Our jails are already crowded with hardworking service members like my husband who simply can't afford bond. Let's not make it worse.

VOTE NO ON SB 6