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**Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute Named Administrator
of Texas Veterans + Family Alliance Pilot Phase Grant Program**

The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance program is aimed at improving access to mental health care services for Texas veterans and military families

DALLAS, TX – The Texas Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC) recently named the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) administrator of Texas Veterans + Family Alliance, a pilot-phase grant program established by Senate Bill 55 during the 84th legislative session. For years, Texas has been at the forefront of addressing the mental health needs of veterans and their families. This year, our state leaders reaffirmed that commitment to those who honorably served in uniform by passing SB 55. Senate Bill 55 authorizes and directs the HHSC to establish a new and innovative grant program for the purpose of supporting community mental health programs providing services and treatment to veterans and their families. Along with this legislative guidance, an allocation of \$20 million has been appropriated for the upcoming biennium (2016-2017).

The grant program begins with a pilot phase where the State of Texas, through HHSC, will commit up to \$1 million in public funds to be matched in equal or greater amount by private contributors or local governments. As administrator for the pilot phase of the grant program, MMHPI will assist HHSC with the design, development, and implementation of the pilot.

“The fundamental commitment of Texas Veterans + Family Alliance is to bring communities together to fill the unmet mental health needs of Texas veterans and military families,” states Sonja Gaines, Associate Commissioner for Mental Health at HHSC. “This exciting grant program creates opportunities to engage community providers in developing innovative approaches to deliver and address unique mental health service needs across the state.”

Projects funded by the pilot grant program will be selected through a competitive statewide request for proposal process. The request for proposals will officially be released later this Fall. The objective will be to award state funding to programs throughout Texas, with decisions on successful applicants for the pilot phase complete by early 2016.

“We are honored to have been selected as administrator for the pilot phase of this program,” says Tom Luce, Chief Executive Officer of MMHPI. “Our vision is that Texas veterans and military families will be able to access the mental health care services they need close to home. This exciting new program will help achieve that vision and it is our goal to provide HHSC with the assistance needed to develop and implement a successful pilot phase.”

About The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that supports the implementation of policies and programs that help Texans obtain effective, efficient mental health care when and where they need it. The Institute’s vision is for Texas to be the national leader in treating people with mental health needs. For more information about the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute, please visit texasstateofmind.org

About Texas Health and Human Services Commission

The mission of HHSC is to maintain and improve the health and human services system in Texas and to administer its programs in accordance with the highest standards of customer service and accountability for the effective use of funds. HHSC oversees the operations of the health and human services system, provides administrative oversight of Texas health and human services programs, and provides direct administration of some programs. For more information about HHSC, please visit hhsc.state.tx.us

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