



# The Senate of Texas

**CÉSAR J. BLANCO**

TEXAS SENATOR  
DISTRICT 29

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## Senator César Blanco Announces the Vanessa Guillén Act

**Austin, Texas** - Today, Senator Blanco joined members of Vanessa Guillén's family and a group of legislators for a press conference to highlight legislation filed in honor of Vanessa Guillén. At the press conference Senator Blanco announced his Senate Bill 623 will now be known as the Vanessa Guillén Act.

Senate Bill 623 aims to protect Texas military members from military sexual assault and provide avenues of justice and resources for victims. Victims of military sexual assault often do not report their assaults due to fear of social and professional retaliation, concerns of confidentiality breaches, and a lack of confidence in the military justice system. Senate Bill 623 passed the Texas Senate unanimously and is pending approval in the Texas House of Representatives.

Last year, the tragic circumstances surrounding Private First Class Vanessa Guillen's disappearance and untimely death, shed light on how the system fails to protect our heroes. On her own base, a place she should have felt safest, PFC Guillén lived in fear. It was reported that she shared with family and friends that she was assaulted on base, but she was too scared to report it. Vanessa Guillén's story exemplifies the unacceptable pervasiveness of sexual assault in the military. But she isn't alone.

While the Texas Legislature has no jurisdiction over the U.S. military, Texas has the largest state military force in the country with close to 24,000 service members.

### **Senator Blanco issued the following statement:**

"No bill could ever replace Vanessa, but to honor her and remember her, I am honored to announce, with the blessing of the Guillén family, that Senate Bill 623 will now be known as the Vanessa Guillén Act.

"I want to express my heartfelt sympathy to the entire Guillén Family, and thank them for their strength and continued advocacy for justice and change. The Guillén family's support for Senate Bill 623 will undoubtedly bring awareness and draw additional support to the bill.

"With the Vanessa Guillén Act, Texas can lead by example in protecting our Texas military members from sexual assault and ensure swift justice is delivered for victims."