

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1280
By: Huffman
Appropriations
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

At the conclusion of each biennium, the state has a number of outstanding claims and judgments against it for varying amounts of money, such as warrants voided by the statute of limitations, outstanding invoices to private vendors, unpaid charges for Medicaid recipients, or court judgment settlements. These claims require additional appropriations to be made to honor the state's obligations under the law. S.B. 1280 provides for sums of money appropriated out of various accounts to pay certain claims and judgments against the state.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1280 appropriates certain sums of money out of the General Revenue Fund Account No. 0001, the State Highway Fund No. 0006, the Game, Fish, and Water Safety General Revenue Account No. 0009, the State Parks General Revenue Account No. 0064, the Compensation to Victims of Crime General Revenue Account No. 0469, and the Unemployment Compensation Clearance Account Fund No. 0936 for payment of itemized claims and judgments plus interest, if any, against the State of Texas.

S.B. 1280 requires any claim or judgment, before it may be paid from money appropriated by the bill, to be verified and substantiated by the administrator of the special fund or account against which the claim or judgment is to be charged and be approved by the attorney general and the comptroller of public accounts. The bill prohibits the payment from money appropriated by the bill of any claim or judgment itemized in the bill that has not been verified and substantiated by the administrator of the special fund or account and approved by the attorney general and the comptroller by August 31, 2017.

S.B. 1280 requires each claim or judgment paid from money appropriated by the bill to contain such information as the comptroller requires but at a minimum to contain the specific reason for the claim or judgment. The bill requires a claim for a void warrant to include a specific identification of the goods, services, refunds, or other items for which the warrant was originally issued and a certification by the original payee or the original payee's successors, heirs, or assigns that the debt is still outstanding. The bill requires a claim or judgment for unpaid goods or services to be accompanied by an invoice or other acceptable documentation of the unpaid account and any other information that may be required by the comptroller.

S.B. 1280 authorizes and directs the comptroller, subject to the conditions and restrictions in the bill and provisions stated in the judgments, to issue one or more warrants on the state treasury, as soon as possible following the bill's effective date, in favor of each of the individuals, firms, or corporations named or claim numbers identified in the bill, in an amount not to exceed the amount set opposite their respective names or claim numbers. The bill requires the comptroller to mail or deliver to each of the individuals, firms, or corporations associated with each claim one or more warrants in payment of all claims included in the bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.