

SUBJECT: Donation of juror reimbursement to crime victim's compensation fund

COMMITTEE: Judicial Affairs— favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Thompson, Hartnett, Clark, Crabb, Garcia, Shields
1 nay — Zbranek
2 absent — Luna, Solis

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, March 20, Local and Uncontested Calendar — 31-0

WITNESSES: No public hearing.

BACKGROUND : Prospective jurors are currently provided a form on which they may elect to donate all or part of their reimbursement for jury service to the crime victim's compensation fund.

DIGEST: SB 756 would eliminate the option allowing prospective jurors to donate part of their reimbursement for jury service to the crime victim's compensation fund. Jurors could still elect to donate all of their reimbursement, and the form would be distributed only to prospective jurors who report for jury service. SB 756 would take effect September 1, 1997.

SUPPORTERS SAY: SB 756 is designed to ease the administrative burden on clerks who must process forms for donation of juror reimbursements to the crime victim's compensation fund. By limiting the forms to only those persons who appear for jury service, the number of forms printed and counted would be reduced. Additionally, requiring that only all or none of the juror reimbursement be donated to the crime victim's compensation fund would eliminate another administrative burden. Being forced to divide the reimbursement significantly increases administrative costs. In many cases, jurors elect to donate a small percentage, sometimes only \$1, requiring the county to use administrative resources to collect, record and account for pennies.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

Jurors should retain the option of donating only a portion of their reimbursement to the crime victim's compensation fund. If allowed to donate part and keep the rest of their reimbursement, jurors are more likely to make a donation, aiding a worthy cause that greatly benefits victims of crime.