

- SUBJECT:** Adjusting payments to survivors of certain peace officers for inflation
- COMMITTEE:** Appropriations — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 22 ayes — Zerwas, Longoria, C. Bell, Buckley, Capriglione, Cortez, S. Davis, Hefner, Howard, Miller, Minjarez, Muñoz, Schaefer, Sheffield, Sherman, Smith, Stucky, Toth, J. Turner, VanDeaver, Walle, Wu
- 0 nays
- 5 absent — G. Bonnen, M. González, Jarvis Johnson, Rose, Wilson
- WITNESSES:** For — Chris Jones, CLEAT; John Riddle, Texas State Association of Fire Fighters; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Donald Baker, Austin Police Association; Eve Stephens, Austin Police Department; Rita Ostrander, Dallas Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas, National Latino Law Enforcement Organization; Michael Glynn, Fort Worth Firefighters Association; Jessica Anderson, Houston Police Department; Ray Hunt, Houston Police Officers Union; Aidan Alvarado, Laredo Fire Fighters Association; Jimmy Rodriguez, San Antonio Police Officers Association; Randy Cain, Texas Fire Chiefs Association)
- Against — None
- On — Ed Heimlich, Citizens United 4 Accountable Government
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 615.022 fixes the payment to survivors of certain law enforcement officers, firefighters, or other public employees killed in the line of duty at \$500,000. The payment is paid out in equal shares if there is more than one eligible recipient.
- Some have noted that the payment to survivors is not adjusted for inflation and could lose value over time.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 3635 would entitle an eligible survivor of certain law enforcement officers, firefighters, or other public employees to receive a lump sum

payment as determined by the bill. If there was more than one eligible recipient, the lump sum payment would be paid to eligible survivors in equal shares.

For the 12 months beginning September 1, 2019, the payment amount would be \$500,000. Effective September 1 of each following year, the board of trustees of the Employees Retirement System of Texas by rule would be required to adjust the amount of the lump sum payment by an amount equal to the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, published by the U.S. Department of Labor for the preceding year.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019, and would apply only to payments made to survivors on or after the bill's effective date.