

- SUBJECT:** Modifying the procedure for donating juror reimbursements
- COMMITTEE:** Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Leach, Davis, Dutton, Julie Johnson, Krause, Middleton, Moody, Schofield, Smith
- 0 nays
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 13 — 31-0
- WITNESSES:** None
- BACKGROUND:** Government Code sec. 61.003 governs donations of reimbursement for jury service, specifying that each person who reports for jury service shall be personally provided a form letter that when signed by the person directs the county treasurer to donate all, or a specific amount designated by the person, of the person's daily reimbursement to certain selected funds or programs, including the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund.
- Concerns have been raised regarding research that has shown that presenting jurors with the option to donate to programs or funds, such as the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund, at the beginning of a criminal proceeding may have an undue influence on the juror's disposition to convict a defendant, since they are confronted with an opportunity to help victims before the proceeding begins.
- DIGEST:** SB 1179 would specify that a person who reported for jury service would be personally provided with a form letter for donation of their reimbursement after jury service was concluded, instead of being provided with the letter upon reporting for jury service.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2021, and would apply only to a person summoned to appear for jury service who was required to appear on or after that date.