

SUBJECT: Appropriations for miscellaneous claims and judgments against the state

COMMITTEE: Appropriations — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 25 ayes — Bonnen, M. González, Ashby, C. Bell, Capriglione, Dominguez, Gates, Holland, Howard, A. Johnson, Jarvis Johnson, Julie Johnson, Minjarez, Morrison, Raney, Rose, Schaefer, Sherman, Stucky, E. Thompson, VanDeaver, Walle, Wilson, Wu, Zwiener

0 nays

2 absent — Dean, Toth

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — Ed Heimlich

BACKGROUND: For decades, each general appropriations act has contained a rider prohibiting the use of funds to pay any judgment or settlement against the state unless the funds are appropriated specifically for such purposes. These provisions are included in Art. 9, sec. 16.04 of the House-passed version of the fiscal 2022-23 general appropriations act.

Each session a bill is filed to appropriate money to pay those who have been awarded a judgment against the state and various other unpaid claims and charges. In some cases, the Legislature must approve certain types of claims. Those who are legally entitled to these funds cannot receive them unless and until the Legislature appropriates the funds.

DIGEST: CSSB 1605 would appropriate money from various accounts to pay outstanding claims and judgments against the state, which are listed individually in the bill.

The bill would appropriate \$35.2 million from the general revenue fund;

\$761,083 from the State Highway Fund; \$5,500 from the lottery general revenue fund; and \$317,871 from the designated trauma facility and emergency medical services general revenue account.

Each claim would have to be verified and substantiated by the administrator of the fund or account that was being charged and be approved by the comptroller and the attorney general.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.