

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
86R21702 SRA-D

C.S.S.B. 1577
By: Alvarado
State Affairs
4/5/2019
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 1577 would prohibit the appropriation and use of state money to settle or pay sexual harassment claims. In 2014, \$84,000 of United States taxpayer money was used to pay a settlement for a sexual assault allegation against a United States Congressman. United States taxpayers, and especially Texas taxpayers, should not be on the hook for state and local officials' bad behavior.

The legislature needs to take a stand on an issue that affects two in five women and one in five men in the State of Texas. This starts with holding our elected and state officials to the highest standards and not allowing them to quietly cover up allegations using state money.

S.B. 1577 amends the Government Code by adding a chapter stating that the legislature is prohibited from appropriating money and a state agency is prohibited from using appropriated money to settle or otherwise pay a sexual assault harassment claim against an elected member of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of state government. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 1577 amends current law relating to a prohibition against the appropriation of money to settle or pay a sexual harassment claim made against certain members of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of state government.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle B, Title 5, Government Code, by adding Chapter 576, as follows:

CHAPTER 576. PROHIBITION ON APPROPRIATION OF MONEY TO SETTLE OR PAY SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIMS

Sec. 576.0001. PROHIBITION ON APPROPRIATION OF MONEY TO SETTLE OR PAY SEXUAL HARASSMENT CLAIMS. Prohibits the legislature from appropriating money and a prohibits a state agency from using appropriated money to settle or otherwise pay a sexual harassment claim made against an elected member of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of state government or a person appointed by the governor to serve as a member of a department, commission, board, or other public office within the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of state government.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2019.