

**SUBJECT:** Appropriations for miscellaneous claims and judgments against the state

**COMMITTEE:** Appropriations — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 23 ayes — Zerwas, Longoria, C. Bell, G. Bonnen, Buckley, Capriglione, Cortez, S. Davis, M. González, Hefner, Howard, Jarvis Johnson, Miller, Muñoz, Schaefer, Sherman, Smith, Stucky, Toth, J. Turner, VanDeaver, Walle, Wilson

0 nays

4 absent — Minjarez, Rose, Sheffield, Wu

**WITNESSES:** For — None

Against — None

On — Ed Heimlich; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Darren McCarty, Office of the Attorney General; Dolores Fojtasek and Jennifer Duran, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts)

**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. The provisions are included in Art. 9, sec. 16.04 of the House-passed version of the fiscal 2020-21 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:** HB 4071 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 \$10.2 million from the general revenue fund; \$5.2 million from the state highway fund; \$797 from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement general revenue account; \$7,643 from the water resources management general revenue account; \$24,586 from the federal civil defense and disaster relief general revenue account; \$152 from the hazardous and solid waste remediation fees general revenue account; \$1,502 from the lottery general revenue account; \$3,200 from the veterans financial assistance program fund; and \$902 from the unemployment compensation clearance account.

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

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.