

HB 1301 -- GOVERNMENTAL COMPENSATION FUND

SPONSOR: Conway (104)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Budget by a vote of 27 to 0.

This bill allows a claim for compensation paid for burial for the death of a crime victim to be made by the funeral home or a relative of the victim.

Currently, the Director of the Department of Revenue is required to deposit \$250,000 annually to the state forensic laboratory account administered by the Department of Public Safety to defray expenses of crime laboratories if such laboratories are registered with the federal Drug Enforcement Agency or the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. This bill changes the required deposit amount to be at least \$250,000 but no more than \$1 million.

The bill changes two of the compensation judgments collected by the court to be deposited into the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund. A class C felony will now pay \$55 and a class D or E felony will pay \$46.

This bill is the same as HB 743 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the Highway Patrol is having trouble attracting and retaining forensic lab personnel. The Crime Victim's Compensation Fund was established in 1981 and receives \$7.50 per court case. Forensic labs help crime victims and currently, receive \$250,000. This bill will allow the lab to benefit from some of the excess monies in the fund and allows the family to sign off first so the funeral home gets paid.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Conway.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say there is a lack of how to use the fund. The focus is to pay victims' families as much as we can for the suffering they have had. We do outreach and education in cities and rural areas.

Testifying on the bill was Bruce Clemonds, Department of Public Safety.