

Judiciary Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-7343

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF THE CLAIMS COMMISSIONER.

Vote Date: 4/8/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/15/2019

File No.: 785

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee
Office of the Claims Commissioner

REASONS FOR BILL:

Currently, the Claims Commissioner's Office has a massive workload that causes a massive delay in the recommendation of the Office for how a claim should be handled. This bill would amend the processes for how the Office can make recommendations for claims to give the Commissioner the ability to delegate certain claims to magistrates to create more efficiency in the Office. There are also provisions added to the bill that would increase the award the Claims Commissioner can give, without CGA approval, which would decrease the amount of claims the legislature and the Judicial Branch would be required to oversee. Additional language in the bill changes the amount of damages required to have a hearing from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to streamline the process for relatively small claims.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

Lines 142 and 143 limits an action of malpractice against the state to only medical malpractice.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Office of the Claims Commissioner, Claims Commissioner, Christy Scott: Supports bill because it will "lighten the workload of the Commissioner, legislature, and judiciary", "streamlines" many procedures to create more efficiency in the office, and allows "claim magistrates to render final decisions on claims".

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

CT Trial Lawyers Association (CTLA): Supports bill because it will “allow the Claims Commissioner to work within the existing framework to reduce its backlog and process claims in a more reasonable period of time” and “each of the changes would help the Commissioner to advance claims through her office and promote efficiency in the system”.

Logan & Mencuccini, LLC, Former Claims Commissioner, J. Paul Vance, Jr.: Supports bill because it will “allow the Claims Commissioner to delegate some decision making authority to a magistrate” and “claims will be more promptly decided and the docket may become more manageable”.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Logan Durant

Date: April 30, 2019