

Judiciary Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1544

AN ACT CONCERNING PRESETTLEMENT LEGAL FUNDING AND LOANS
MADE IN CONNECTION WITH THE ANTICIPATED RECEIPT OF A

Title: WRONGFUL INCARCERATION AWARD.

Vote Date: 4/4/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/28/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Upon release, exonerees face several immediate financial challenges, such as finding housing, transportation, health care, and other basic needs. Without a strong support system on the outside, a loan against an anticipated payout from the state can be critical toward rebuilding the lives of exonerees. Requiring the Department of Banking to look at consumer complaints on pre-settlement loans for exonerees for the last five years will help determine if any legislative changes need to be made to provide enhanced consumer protections.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language adds “and (B) establish a process for the appointment of a trustee for a person described in subparagraph (A) of this subdivision relative to the receipt and disbursement of a wrongful incarceration award while such person's claim is pending with the Office of the Claims Commissioner.”

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Amanda Wallwin, State Policy Advocate, The Innocence Project: She testified in support of this bill because most wrongfully convicted people face serious effects of such, and this legislation is a step in the right direction to ensuring that exonerees are set up for success. A

loan against an exoneree's likely eventual payout from the state can be a crucial lifeline for those wrongfully incarcerated.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Griffin Olshan

Date: April 8, 2025