

By: Gutierrez

S.B. No. 1710

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to the creation of the School Violence Victims' 3 Compensation Fund

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding to 6 Chapter 403, subchapter U to read as follows:

7 SUBCHAPTER U. GENERAL PROVISIONS

8 Sec. 403.601. SHORT TITLE. This chapter may be cited as the 9 School Violence Victims' Compensation Act.

10 Sec. 403.602. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The 11 legislature recognizes that it shall be the duty of the legislature 12 to establish and make suitable provision for the support and 13 maintenance of an efficient system of public free schools. The 14 legislature further finds that a public school system in which 15 Texas students are not safe from gun violence is not efficient nor 16 suitable. The legislature also finds that there is a public 17 calamity in relation to gun violence in Texas public schools 18 necessitating a grant of aid to the students, teachers, and 19 educational support personnel that have been victims of gun 20 violence.

21 (b) It is the legislature's intent that the compensation 22 provided to the innocent victims of the violent gun-related crime 23 that have occurred and will occur at Texas public schools 24 ameliorates the pain caused by those attacks.

1       Sec. 406.603. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

2               (1) "Claimant" means any of the following individuals,  
3       other than a service provider, who is entitled to file or has filed  
4       a claim for compensation under this chapter:

5               (A) an authorized individual acting on behalf of  
6       a victim;

7               (B) a dependent of a victim who died or was  
8       injured as a result of the criminally injurious conduct;

9               (C) an immediate family member or a household  
10       member of a victim;

11               (D) an authorized individual acting on behalf of  
12       a child described by Paragraph (B) or (C).

13               (2) "Household member" means an individual who:

14               (A) is related by consanguinity or affinity to  
15       the victim or is the legal guardian of the victim; and

16               (B) resided in the same permanent household as  
17       the victim at the time that the criminally injurious conduct  
18       occurred.

19               (4) "Immediate family member" means an individual who  
20       is related to a victim within the second degree by consanguinity or  
21       affinity or is a legal guardian of the victim.

22               (5) "Victim" means an individual who suffered personal  
23       injury or death as a result of a gun-related incident in a Texas  
24       public school since January 1, 2018.

25       Sec. 403.604 TYPES OF ASSISTANCE. (a) On receiving and  
26       reviewing an application for compensation under Section 403.605,  
27       the Comptroller shall authorize a cash payment within 60 days to a

1 victim, a victim's immediate family, or a member of the household of  
2 the victim if the victim was seriously physically injured,  
3 murdered, or suffering from mental or emotional disability on  
4 account of a gun-related incident in a Texas public school.

5           **(b) After certifying the veracity of the application, the**  
6 Comptroller shall authorize the following cash payment to a victim,  
7 a victim's immediate family, or a member of the household of the  
8 victim:

9           **(1) \$1,000,000 dollars per deceased victim payable to**  
10 the victim's immediate surviving family or members of the  
11 household;

12           **(2) \$500,000 dollars per seriously physically injured**  
13 victim payable to the victim;

14           **(3) \$100,000 dollars per mental or emotional**  
15 disability victim payable to the victim; and

16           **(4) \$50,000 per physically injured victim payable to**  
17 the victim.

18           **(c) Upon reviewing the totality of factual circumstances**  
19 surrounding the application, the Comptroller may divide the award  
20 between members of the immediate family, household, or legal  
21 guardians.

22           **Sec. 403.605. APPLICATION FOR COMPENSATION.**   **(a) An**  
23 applicant for compensation under this chapter must apply in writing  
24 on a form prescribed by the Comptroller.

25           **(b) An application for compensation under this chapter must**  
26 be verified and contain:

27           **(1) the date on which the injurious conduct occurred;**

1                   (2) a description of the nature and circumstances of  
2 the injurious conduct;

3                   (3) a statement indicating the extent of the  
4 psychological or physical injury caused by the injurious conduct,  
5 including any disability resulting from the injury incurred;

6                   (4) an authorization permitting the board to verify  
7 the contents of the application; and

8                   (5) the relationship by consanguinity, affinity, or  
9 legal guardianship to any victim of a gun-related incident in a  
10 Texas public school.

11                  Sec. 403.606. REVIEW OF APPLICATION. (a) The Comptroller  
12 shall review each application for compensation described by Section  
13 403.605 to ensure the application is complete.

14                  (b) The Comptroller shall return to the claimant or victim  
15 any application that is incomplete and shall provide a brief  
16 statement showing the additional information required. Not later  
17 than the 30th day after the date of receiving a returned  
18 application, a claimant or victim may provide the additional  
19 information.

20                  (c) The Comptroller may investigate an application.

21                  (d) As part of the Comptroller's review and verification  
22 duties under this subchapter, the Comptroller may investigate the  
23 application for truthfulness.

24                  Sec. 403.607. METHOD OF PAYMENT. The Comptroller shall pay  
25 an award in a lump sum.

26                  SECTION 2. This compensation shall be cumulative of all  
27 other remedies, benefits, or compensation provided for by law.

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1 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.