

**Department of Planning and Budget
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement**

PUBLISHED: 1/21/2025 4:05 PM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1780
Bill Title: Claims

Patron: Sullivan

Bill Summary: Gilbert Merritt III; compensation for wrongful incarceration. Grants relief in an amount to be appropriated to Gilbert Merritt III, who was wrongly convicted of and subsequently incarcerated for first-degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes

Items Impacted: 261 of HB 1600

Explanation: The bill directs that “there is hereby appropriated from the general fund of the state treasury the sum of an amount to be provided in the appropriation act for the relief of Gilbert Merritt III...” A budget amendment would be required to appropriate such relief.

Fiscal Summary: Based on the Treasury’s calculations using Mr. Merritt’s dates of wrongful incarceration, the bill directs an amount of \$1,317,652 in the appropriation act for the relief of Mr. Merritt from the general fund of the Treasury.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>
Treasury	-	\$1,317,652	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	-	\$1,317,652	-	-	-	-

Fiscal Analysis: The bill would provide relief to Gilbert Merritt III. Mr. Merritt was found to have been wrongfully incarcerated, and this legislation is intended to compensate him for the time he was wrongfully incarcerated. Per calculations performed by the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) based on Mr. Merritt’s dates of incarceration, he would be entitled to \$1,317,652 for wrongful incarceration, under the provisions of this legislation. Any amount for such compensation would need to be appropriated in the Appropriation Act from the general fund of the Treasury to make the payment.

Other: If HB1914 is enacted into law, the relief calculations in this bill could be affected by the increase in additional compensation awarded for wrongful incarceration resulting from an intentional act.