

Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

CS/CS/HB 535 — Funeral Service Benefits for Public Safety Officers

by State Affairs Committee; Constitutional Rights, Rule of Law and Government Operations Subcommittee; and Rep. Botana and others (CS/CS/SB 364 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee; and Senator Avila)

The bill creates the “Respecting Their Sacrifice Act.” The bill permits the head of a state or local law enforcement agency to authorize travel expenses for a law enforcement officer to attend a funeral within the state of a law enforcement officer who was killed in the line of duty.

The bill increases the amount that must be paid towards the funeral or burial expenses of a law enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officer who was employed full time by a state agency and killed in the line of duty while performing law enforcement duties or as a result of an assault against the officer under riot conditions from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

The bill requires the head of a state or local law enforcement agency to grant up to 8 hours of administrative leave to a law enforcement officer in order for the officer to attend the funeral service of another officer from the agency who was killed in the line of duty. The bill authorizes the denial of such leave to maintain minimum or adequate staffing levels.

The bill also expands a definition of “official state business” for a law enforcement officer to allow the use of a state vehicle to attend the funeral within the state of a law enforcement who was killed in the line of duty.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor’s signature, these provisions take effect October 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 110-0