

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2026 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Special Master on Claim Bills

SB 14 — Relief of Jose Correa by Miami-Dade County

by Senator Rodriguez

The bill authorizes and directs Miami-Dade County to appropriate from funds not otherwise encumbered and to draw a warrant in the sum of \$4,100,000 payable to Jose Correa as compensation for injuries and damages caused by the negligent operation of a Miami-Dade County bus driven by a county employee.

The amount paid by Miami-Dade County and the amount awarded under this bill are intended to provide the sole compensation for all present and future claims arising out of the factual situation described in the bill which resulted in the injuries of Jose Correa. Additionally, the total amount paid for attorney fees and lobbying fees relating to this claim may not exceed 25 percent of the total amount awarded under the bill.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 37-1; House 113-0

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HB 6507 — Relief of L.E. by the Department of Children and Families

by Rep. Tramont and others (SB 6 by Senator Calatayud)

The claim bill awards \$3.8 million in state funds to the irrevocable trust for L.E., a minor who was severely injured due in part to negligence committed by the Department of Children and Families. L.E. first came to the attention of the department when clear signs of abuse were evident to the hospital staff attending her birth. Despite evidence of numerous prior incidents of child abuse committed by the biological parents, the department negligently supported placing L.E. in their custody without proper supervision or services. Shortly thereafter, L.E., suffered permanent life-altering injuries caused by the biological parents. The trust will fund her support and medical needs.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 34-0; House 109-0

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CS/CS/HB 6509 — Relief of the Estate of Mark LaGatta by the Department of Transportation

by Budget Committee; Civil Justice & Claims Subcommittee; and Rep. Grow (SB 26 by Senators McClain and Massullo)

The claim bill awards \$1.2 million in state funds to the Estate of Mark LaGatta to compensate the heirs of Mark LaGatta for injuries he sustained that were caused by the negligence of employees of the Department of Transportation. Mr. LaGatta was lawfully operating his motorcycle in Levy County, Florida when a tractor assisting in road maintenance of S.R. 24 wrongfully entered the travel lane and caused the collision. Mr. LaGatta suffered amputation of a leg and other serious injuries.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 35-0; House 108-0

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HB 6515 — Relief of Lourdes Latour and Edward Latour by Miami-Dade County

by Rep. Busatta and others (SB 24 by Senators Gruters and Rodriguez)

This is an uncontested claim bill for local funds in the amount of \$500,000, payable from unencumbered funds of Miami-Dade County. The bill is based on a settlement agreement between Lourdes and Edward Latour and Miami-Dade County. The settlement agreement resolved a civil action that arose from the alleged negligence of the County that caused injuries to Lourdes Latour and her husband, Edward.

The bill provides that the total amount paid for attorney fees relating to this claim may not exceed 25 percent of the total amount awarded under the bill.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 38-1; House 108-0

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HB 6517 — Relief of Heriberto A. Sanchez-Mayen by the City of St. Petersburg

by Rep. Berfield and others (SB 16 by Senator Rouson)

HB 6517 provides for the relief of Heriberto Sanchez-Mayen (Sanchez-Mayen) by authorizing and directing a payment of \$2.3 million from the City of St. Petersburg (City) to satisfy the unpaid balance of a \$2.5 million settlement agreement reached between Sanchez-Mayen and the City. As part of this agreement, Sanchez-Mayen also agreed to withdraw claims against St. Petersburg police officers Michael Thacker and Sarah Gaddis, in their individual capacities. The settlement resolved a civil action arising from injuries sustained by Sanchez-Mayen while in police custody, which included significant, debilitating, spinal injuries and resulted in the amputation of both of his legs. The City previously paid \$200,000 toward the settlement.

The proceeds are intended to be placed in a special needs trust to help preserve certain public benefits while providing for Sanchez-Mayen's ongoing needs. The funds are also expected to be used to resolve Medicare liens of \$96,792.72 and \$175,734.11, along with an associated penalty of \$4,285.00, related to Sanchez-Mayen's prior medical care. The City did not admit liability but agreed not to oppose the filing of a claim bill to recover the remaining settlement amount.

The total amount paid for attorney fees relating to this claim may not exceed 25 percent of the total amounts awarded under this bill.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

Vote: Senate 39-0; House 107-0