Judiciary Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: SJ-39 / Bill Status / Public Hearing Testimony
Title: RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE DECISION OF THE CLAIMS COMMISSIONER TO DISMISS THE CLAIM AGAINST THE STATE OF JULIE LAMOTHE.
Vote Date: 3/30/2026
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/16/2026
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Judiciary Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

If the Claims Commissioner denies a claim, the claimant has the right to request that the General Assembly review the Commissioner's decision. The Julie Lamothe claim was submitted to the Judiciary Committee from the Office of the Claims Commissioner with the annual submission of all claims requesting review by the General Assembly.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The substitute language consolidated the confirmation of dismissal claims of thirty claimants into one resolution for efficiency and simplicity due to the volume; the original language only pertained to one claim.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Julie Lamothe: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing great details about her case and asking the State to review it and decide.

Shakshi Pandey: They submitted testimony in opposition of the dismissal.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 35:

Cathy Camera: She submitted testimony, providing details of the claim and expressing frustration that Federal Court didn't support their claim of deliberate indifference; she provided supporting details about the awareness of risk, failure to act, and the disregarding of consequences. She asked that the Judiciary Committee vote against the Claims Commissioner's decision.

Kenneth Krayeske, Attorney: He submitted testimony, providing details of his client's case and requesting that the Committee overturn the decision of the Claims Commissioner. He outlined a detailed fact pattern regarding the timeline of the claim and asked that the estate be granted permission to sue.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 42:

William Ricks: He submitted testimony, stating that the Small Claims court exceeded their authority and asking the Judiciary Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be reviewed in a court of law.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 36:

William Ricks: He submitted testimony, stating that the Small Claims court exceeded their authority and asking the Judiciary Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be reviewed in a court of law.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 59:

William Ricks: He submitted testimony, stating that the Small Claims court exceeded their authority and asking the Judiciary Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be reviewed in a court of law.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 51:

William Ricks: He submitted testimony, stating that the Small Claims court exceeded their authority and asking the Judiciary Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be reviewed in a court of law.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 39:

William Ricks: He submitted testimony, stating that the Small Claims court exceeded their authority and asking the Judiciary Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be reviewed in a court of law.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 60:

Miguel Melendez: He submitted testimony, explaining that he did not miss the deadline to file his response to the motion to dismiss. He additionally provided details on an incident

where he was placed under arrest for an outstanding warrant that was due to having his identity stolen. He respectfully asked the Committee to allow his claim to move forward and be fully reviewed.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 45:

Jo-Ann Connelly: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing substantial details about her claim. She stated that it is the Judiciary Committee's position that they cannot overrule the Claims Commissioner's decision due to the statute of limitations, but she disagrees and believes they have the authority to do so and cited statutes to back up her claim. She requested that the Committee vacate the decision of the Claims Commissioner and grant her permission to sue.

Tracy Donovan: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing details to Connelly's claim against the state and expressing her frustration with the claims system and process. She shared details about experiencing what she considered to be an unjustified raid on her property over the animals in her possession. She asked the Committee to support Ms. Connelly's appeal.

Jennifer Tow: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing details to Connelly's claim and argued that the Judiciary Committee does have the power to overturn the Claims Commissioner's decision despite the statute of limitations. She expressed her frustration with the process and asked that the Committee to oppose the resolution and overturn the decision of the Claims Commissioner.

Nina Walsh: She submitted testimony in opposition, expressing her support for Connelly and asking the Committee to oppose the resolution and overturn the decision of the Claims Commissioner.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 45:

Joanne Avoletta: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing details of her claim and expressing his frustration with the process. She asked that the Committee vote no to remand the claim back to the Claims Commissioner for a hearing.

Deborah Stevenson, Attorney: She submitted testimony in opposition, providing details of her client's claim. She asked that the Committee vote no to remand the claim back to the Claims Commissioner for a hearing.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 57:

Granville Watson: He submitted testimony in opposition, asking the Committee to vacate the decision of the Claims Commissioner to dismiss and allow the claim to move forward.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 46:

Attorney Alexander Taubes: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution. He provided an overview of his client's case and expressed frustration at the fact that his client

did what he was supposed to do and yet was still turned down; as such, he believes his client should have a way to seek compensation. He requested the Committee reject the resolution.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 41:

Alexander Taubes, Attorney: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution. He provided details about the timeline of his client's health. He believes his client's mother should be able to seek accountability and requested the Committee reject the resolution.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 47:

The following individuals submitted testimony in opposition to the Claims Commissioner's decision to dismiss the claim of Columbia Dental.

Dr. Jean Amara, Anonymous 695, Anonymous 706, Anonymous 709, Llewellyn Dolphin, Bibi Khan, Azam Sayed, Safa Sayed, Shireen Sayed, Aziza Sher Ali, Ehsan Amni, Anonymous 699, Anonymous 705, Anonymous 713, Anonymous 714, Anonymous 716, Anonymous 726, Anonymous 731, Anonymous Smita Baral, Ismail Ben Fdil, Sai Rakesh Boche, Jeff Chandler, Tracy Danziger, Pauline Davis, Vijaya Madhavi Done, Yeshwaritha EB, Nabil ElHadad, Stella Emmanuel, Sandhya Gudaru, Shaaban Habet, Nikos Kasikas, Hamza laanab, Nishant Lal, Dr. Shahram Lashgari, Behdad Mohammadi, Farzaneh Mohammadi, Nikos Mohammadi, Reza Mohammadi, Taher Mohammadi, Harish Mullaguri, John Pickering, Chandrika Podapati, Forough Pooya, Parvin Pooya, Jolanta Szelagowska, Bouchra Tahiri, Hani Tavana, Yatziri Tobon, Kendra Waites, Reddy Hemanth Bodigandla, Sandesh Pawar, Timur Rakhimov, and Gabrielle Siglos.

Linda Winbey, Attorney: She submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution on behalf of her client. She opposes the dismissal on limitations grounds and believes the claim should proceed based on her client continuing to be harmed by the press releases publication; she provided evidence to support her argument. She asked the

The following individuals submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution, stating that Columbia Dental should be able to seek accountability. They asked the Committee to allow the claim to proceed and be fully heard through the judicial process.

Drew Wilder, Stephanie O'Charek, and Diane Costa

Graciela Panuncio: She submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution. She explained that she was a former Regional Manager for Columbia Dental and detailed the company's system that managed dental assistants and their deadlines. She shared her experience as a patient and firmly disagreed with the claims being made about the company.

Milla Riggio: She submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution, providing examples of Dr. Mohammadi's professionalism and character. She attested to how hard he's worked after arriving in the country as an Iranian immigrant with only a few dollars to his name. She asked the Committee not to uphold the dismissal.

Thomas Riggio: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution. He is both a patient as well as a former employee and shared his experiences and observations in comparison to what was being reported.
Hashir Sayed: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution, speaking to the damage that was done by the press release and expressing frustration at the lack of explanation of the underlying allegations and lack of public clarity. He spoke of Dr. Mohammadi's character and urged the Committee to reconsider the dismissal and allow the claim to move forward for a hearing.

Thomas Amato, Attorney: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution. He provided details about his client's case. He respectfully asked the Committee to vacate the decision of the Claims Commissioner and authorize his client to sue.

Abbas Mohammadi: He submitted testimony in opposition to the Claims Commissioner's decision of dismissal. He explained that the public posting of the press release continues to make it difficult to hire staff or retain customers.

Nikos Mohammadi: He submitted testimony in opposition, sharing how the press release caused distress to his father and family and adversely impacted the business.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 49:

Attorney Thomas A. Virgulto: He submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution, stating that the dismissal for failure to exhaust all administrative remedies was in error. He provided exhibits for the Committee's review.

The following testimony was submitted for HJ 54:

Jennifer Buonfiglio: She submitted testimony in opposition to the resolution, providing context of the claim and asking for the Committee to reopen it.

The following testimony was submitted for SJ 47:

Paul Lewis: He submitted testimony in opposition to the Claims Commissioners decision of dismissal. He provided significant detail regarding his case and asked that he be granted permission for the claim to move forward.

Reported by: James Finlay and Kirstin Breiner **Date:** April 14, 2026