

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Section 12 of Article VI of the Oklahoma Constitution, I have vetoed the following provisions of Enrolled House Bill 2235: (1) the provision in Section 2 that amends 51 O.S. 2021, Section 154.B to add a new subsection B.8, and (2) Section 4.

I support the intent of House Bill 2235—increasing the compensation available for individuals who have been incarcerated due to wrongful conviction. To that end, I approve all the provisions of this bill except for the appropriations directed by the Vetoed Provisions.

House Bill 2235 is subject to my scrutiny and line-item veto authority because it makes appropriations of money embracing distinct items, sets apart a specific portion of money to be applied to an expenditure, purchase, or expense for a specified purpose, and materially alters the conditions of funds previously specified for expenditure. The bill makes multiple appropriations.

The vetoed provision in Section 2 provides health coverage to claimants as though employees of the Department of Corrections. The bill directs that “[t]he Legislature shall appropriate funds to the Tort Claims Liability Revolving Fund for costs associated with providing group health benefit plan coverage by the Department to a claimant[.]”

Similarly, Section 4 waives tuition and fees at Oklahoma colleges for claimants and their children, at the expense of the State, altering the conditions of funds previously specified for expenditure.

I believe the other provisions in House Bill 2235 are adequate, at this time, to compensate wrongfully convicted individuals; adding legislatively appropriated free health insurance and college is unnecessary.

For these reasons, I have vetoed the above-referenced provisions of Enrolled House Bill 2235.