

$20 million suit in police torture case

by UPI

CHICAGO -- The Chicago City Council approved nearly \$20 million in settlements for four men allegedly tortured into murder confessions by a former police commander. Council members Wednesday unanimously approved settlements that could reach \$19.8 million for four men who said retired police Cmdr. Jon Burge and his fellow detectives tortured them into making confessions, the Chicago Tribune reported Thursday. The four men involved in the case were all pardoned from death row in January 2003 by Republican Gov. George Ryan. Councilman Ed Smith thanked Ryan during the hearing, saying the case put a "black eye on the city." Ryan is currently serving a 6 1/2 year sentence for corruption at a federal prison facility in Wisconsin. Investigators suspect Burge and his officers used electric shocks, suffocation and other alleged torture tactics on scores of suspects in the 1980s. U.S. Atty. Patrick Fitzgerald opened a perjury investigation against Burge and his detectives following the expiring of the statute of limitations in the case. The City Council said it was "a disgrace" that Burge is freely living in Florida and collects a city pension.

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