1   A bill to be entitled

2   An act relating to dependency mediation

3   services; amending s. 39.4075, F.S.; requiring

4   each judicial circuit to establish a dependency

5   mediation program; providing for funding of the

6   programs; providing an effective date.

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8   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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10   Section 1. Section 39.4075, Florida Statutes, 1998

11 Supplement, is amended to read:

12   39.4075 Referral of a dependency case to mediation.--

13   (1) Each circuit shall establish a dependency

14 mediation program to provide dependency mediation services in

15 that circuit.At any stage in a dependency proceeding, any

16 party may request the court to refer the parties to mediation

17 in accordance with chapter 44 and rules and procedures

18 developed by the Supreme Court.

19   (2) A court may refer the parties to mediation. When

20 such services are available,The court must determine whether

21 it is in the best interests of the child to refer the parties

22 to mediation.

23   (3) Dependency mediation programs shall be funded from

24 general revenue.The court department shall advise the parties

25 that they are responsible for contributing to the cost of the

26 dependency mediation to the extent of their ability to pay.

27   (4) This section applies only to courts in counties in

28 which dependency mediation programs have been established and

29 does not require the establishment of such programs in any

30 county.

31   Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1999.

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CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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2   SENATE SUMMARY

3   Requires each judicial circuit to establish a dependency
      mediation program. Provides that such programs are to be
4   funded from general revenue.

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