

By Representative Siplin

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act for the relief of Johnny L. Woods;  
3           providing an appropriation from the General  
4           Revenue Fund to the Department of Legal Affairs  
5           to compensate Johnny L. Woods for injuries and  
6           damages he sustained as a result of a home  
7           invasion; providing an effective date.

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9           WHEREAS, on March 20, 1997, Mr. Johnny L. Woods became  
10          the victim of a home invasion in which his home was  
11          burglarized and he was severely injured and rendered legally  
12          blind, lost an eye, and suffered speech impairment due to the  
13          loss of his voice box, and

14                 WHEREAS, the perpetrator of these offenses was  
15          eventually imprisoned as a result of a probation violation and  
16          sentenced to 5 years in a correctional institution, and

17                 WHEREAS, Mr. Woods has stated that the state attorney's  
18          office never informed him that he might be entitled to victim  
19          compensation benefits pursuant to sections 960.01-960.28,  
20          Florida Statutes, the Florida Crimes Compensation Act, and

21                 WHEREAS, a letter from an assistant attorney general in  
22          the Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida attests that that office  
23          "has reviewed both the case file and our case management  
24          system and has been unable to locate any documentation  
25          indicating that Mr. Woods was informed of the Victim's Comp.  
26          program" and that a victim advocate was never assigned to his  
27          case, "which lends credibility to his contention that he was  
28          not informed of the victim's compensation program," and

29                 WHEREAS, when a court, on October 24, 1997, sentenced  
30          the defendant in this case to 2 years' community control, the  
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1 court also ordered the defendant to pay Mr. Woods \$15,000 in  
2 restitution, and

3 WHEREAS, according to the abovementioned assistant  
4 attorney general's letter, the defendant subsequently violated  
5 his community control and was sentenced to 5 years in the  
6 Department of Corrections and is unlikely ever to pay  
7 restitution to Mr. Woods, and

8 WHEREAS, after learning of the victim's compensation  
9 program through a conversation with a friend of his who is a  
10 private investigator, Mr. Woods filed a claim for  
11 compensation, and

12 WHEREAS, because his claim was not timely filed in  
13 accordance with section 960.07(2), Florida Statutes, the  
14 Department of Legal Affairs, on July 11, 2000, denied Mr.  
15 Woods' claim, and

16 WHEREAS, since Mr. Woods does not have the wherewithal  
17 to appeal that decision to the district court of appeals, he  
18 is seeking to obtain equitable recovery under this act, NOW,  
19 THEREFORE,

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

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23 Section 1. The facts stated in the preamble to this  
24 act are found and declared to be true.

25 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General  
26 Revenue Fund to the Department of Legal Affairs the sum of  
27 \$15,000 for the relief of Johnny L. Woods for injuries and  
28 damages sustained.

29 Section 3. The Comptroller is directed to draw a  
30 warrant in favor of Johnny L. Woods in the sum of \$15,000 upon  
31 the funds of the Department of Legal Affairs in the State

1 Treasury and the State Treasurer is directed to pay the same  
2 out of such funds in the State Treasury.

3 Section 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
4 law.

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7 HOUSE SUMMARY

8 Provides a \$15,000 appropriation from the General Revenue  
9 Fund to the Department of Legal Affairs for the purpose  
10 of compensating Johnny L. Woods for injuries and damages  
he sustained as a result of a home invasion.

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