

By Representative Berfield

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act for the relief of Laura D. Strazza;
3 providing an appropriation to compensate her
4 for injuries she sustained as a result of the
5 negligence of an employee of the Department of
6 Agriculture and Consumer Services; providing an
7 effective date.

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9 WHEREAS, on April 25, 1996, Laura D. Strazza was riding
10 as a passenger in a motor vehicle on U.S. 1 in Juno Beach,
11 Palm Beach County, and

12 WHEREAS, an employee of the Department of Agriculture
13 and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, was operating, on
14 and next to that highway, a large transport truck that
15 collided with the motor vehicle in which Laura D. Strazza was
16 a passenger, and

17 WHEREAS, as a consequence of this motor-vehicle crash,
18 Laura D. Strazza sustained multiple grievous injuries such
19 that she has been unable to work, has undergone surgical
20 procedures, and needs to undergo future surgical procedures,
21 and

22 WHEREAS, a legal action was brought by Laura Strazza, a
23 single woman, against the Department of Agriculture and
24 Consumer Services, and

25 WHEREAS, on July 13, 1999, a jury rendered a verdict in
26 favor of Laura D. Strazza, finding that the Department of
27 Agriculture and Consumer Services was partly negligent in
28 causing a motor-vehicle crash between the vehicle in which Ms.
29 Strazza was riding as a passenger and the department's
30 transport truck, and

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1 WHEREAS, the jury rendered damages in the amount of
2 \$1,464,000, and, after reduction for collateral sources and
3 comparative negligence of the driver of the vehicle in which
4 Ms. Strazza was riding, a Final Judgment in the amount of
5 \$944,829 and a Cost Judgment in the amount of \$32,490.62, both
6 bearing interest at the statutory rate of 10 percent per year,
7 were entered against the Department of Agriculture and
8 Consumer Services, and

9 WHEREAS, after the Department of Agriculture and
10 Consumer Services pays Laura Strazza \$100,000, the maximum
11 amount allowable under section 768.28, Florida Statutes, the
12 remainder owed under the judgment will be \$877,319.62, NOW,
13 THEREFORE,

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

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

19 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General
20 Revenue Fund to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
21 Services the sum of \$877,319.62 for the relief of Laura D.
22 Strazza for injuries and damages sustained.

23 Section 3. The Comptroller is directed to draw a
24 warrant in favor of Laura D. Strazza in the amount of
25 \$877.319.62 upon funds of the Department of Agriculture and
26 Consumer Services in the State Treasury, and the State
27 Treasurer is directed to pay the same out of such funds in the
28 State Treasury.

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

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

Providing an appropriation for the relief of Laura D. Strazza for injuries and damages she sustained as a result of the negligence of an employee of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.