

By Senator Diaz de la Portilla

34-70A-02

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Escambia County; providing
3 for the relief of Bronwen Dodd; authorizing and
4 directing the District School Board of Escambia
5 County to compensate Ms. Dodd for personal
6 injuries that she suffered due to the
7 negligence of an employee of the school board;
8 providing an effective date.
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10 WHEREAS, on the afternoon of March 24, 1997, an
11 automobile-school bus accident occurred at the intersection of
12 Summit Boulevard and Goya Drive in Escambia County, and
13 WHEREAS, Ms. Bronwen Dodd was driving a 1988 Honda east
14 on Summit Boulevard, and a driver employed by the Escambia
15 County School Board was driving the school bus west on Summit
16 Boulevard, and
17 WHEREAS, the driver of the school bus had stopped and
18 turned left in order to go south on Goya Drive, and
19 WHEREAS, as the school bus was turning south onto Goya,
20 it struck Ms. Dodd's Honda, causing that vehicle to collide
21 with another car that was stopped on Goya Drive, and
22 WHEREAS, a court subsequently found that the school-bus
23 driver had violated the right-of-way in making the turn, and
24 WHEREAS, as a result of the accident, Ms. Dodd suffered
25 severe injuries, including: a closed-head injury (with loss of
26 consciousness); basilar skull, temporal, and sinus fractures;
27 a fractured mandible; cranial nerve injury; significant dental
28 injuries with multiple avulsions of her left incisor, her left
29 medial incisor, maxillary teeth, and canines; bilateral
30 pneumothoraces; a punctured lower lip; a lacerated tongue;
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1 multiple lacerations to her arm, face, and lower extremities;
2 and optical and auditory damage, and

3 WHEREAS, those injuries necessitated extensive medical
4 treatment, rehabilitation, and restorative treatments, and

5 WHEREAS, litigation relating to this accident was begun
6 and, after two unsuccessful attempts at mediation, both
7 parties agreed to participate in binding arbitration, which
8 took place on December 18, 2000, and

9 WHEREAS, on December 20, 2000, the arbitration panel
10 awarded Ms. Dodd \$275,000, which did not include any award for
11 past medical expenses, and

12 WHEREAS, after the arbitrators assessed 20 percent
13 negligence to Ms. Dodd, her award was reduced to \$220,000, and

14 WHEREAS, a final judgment in the amount of \$340,999.75
15 was entered against the Escambia County School Board on May
16 21, 1999, and

17 WHEREAS, the school board will pay to Ms. Dodd the sum
18 of \$100,000, which is the statutory limit on waivers of
19 sovereign immunity, and Ms. Dodd is, therefore, petitioning
20 the Legislature for further reimbursement in the amount of
21 \$240,999.75, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

27 Section 2. The District School Board of Escambia
28 County is authorized and directed to appropriate from funds of
29 the county not otherwise appropriated and to draw a warrant in
30 the amount of \$240,999.75, which amount includes statutory
31 attorney's fees and costs, payable to Bronwen Dodd as

1 compensation for injuries and damages sustained by Ms. Dodd as
2 a result of the negligence of an employee of the school board.
3 Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
4 law.
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