

By Senator Lawson

6-14-03

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 for attorney's fees and costs;  
9           providing an effective date.

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11           WHEREAS, on the afternoon of March 24, 1997, an  
12   automobile-school bus accident occurred at the intersection of  
13   Summit Boulevard and Goya Drive in Escambia County, and

14           WHEREAS, Ms. Bronwen Dodd was driving a 1988 Honda  
15   eastwardly on Summit Boulevard, and a driver employed by the  
16   Escambia County School Board was driving the school bus  
17   westwardly on Summit Boulevard, and

18           WHEREAS, the driver of the school bus had stopped and  
19   turned left in order to go south on Goya Drive, and

20           WHEREAS, as the school bus was turning south onto Goya,  
21   it struck Ms. Dodd's Honda, causing that vehicle to collide  
22   with another car that was stopped on Goya Drive, and

23           WHEREAS, a court subsequently found that the driver of  
24   the school bus violated the right-of-way in making the turn,  
25   and

26           WHEREAS, as a result of the accident, Ms. Dodd suffered  
27   severe injuries, including: a closed-head injury (with loss of  
28   consciousness); basilar skull, temporal, and sinus fractures;  
29   a fractured mandible; cranial nerve injury; significant dental  
30   injuries with multiple avulsions of her left incisor, her left  
31   medial incisor, maxillary teeth, and canines; bilateral

1 pneumothoraces; a punctured lower lip; a lacerated tongue;  
2 multiple lacerations to her arm, face, and lower extremities;  
3 and optical and auditory damage, and

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

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

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

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

15 WHEREAS, a final judgment in the amount of \$340,999.75  
16 was entered against the Escambia County School Board on May  
17 21, 1999, and

18 WHEREAS, the school board will pay to Ms. Dodd the sum  
19 of \$100,000, which is the statutory limit on waivers of  
20 sovereign immunity, and Ms. Dodd is, therefore, petitioning  
21 the Legislature for further reimbursement in the amount of  
22 \$240,999.75, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

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

1 attorney's fees and costs, payable to Bronwen Dodd as  
2 compensation for injuries and damages sustained by Ms. Dodd as  
3 a result of the negligence of an employee of the school board.

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

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