

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to Escambia County; providing for the  
3 relief of Bronwen Dodd; authorizing and directing the  
4 District School Board of Escambia County to compensate  
5 Bronwen Dodd for personal injuries that she suffered due  
6 to the negligence of an employee of the school board;  
7 providing for attorney's fees and costs; providing an  
8 effective date.

9  
10 WHEREAS, on the afternoon of March 24, 1997, an accident  
11 involving an automobile and a school bus occurred at the  
12 intersection of Summit Boulevard and Goya Drive in Escambia  
13 County, and

14 WHEREAS, Bronwen Dodd was driving a 1988 Honda eastwardly  
15 on Summit Boulevard, and a driver employed by the Escambia  
16 County School Board was driving a school bus westwardly on  
17 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 Drive, it struck Bronwen Dodd's Honda, causing that vehicle to  
22 collide with another car that was stopped on Goya Drive, and

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

25 WHEREAS, as a result of the accident, Bronwen Dodd suffered  
26 severe injuries, including: a closed-head injury (with loss of  
27 consciousness); basilar skull, temporal, and sinus fractures; a  
28 fractured mandible; cranial nerve injury; significant dental

29 | injuries with multiple avulsions of her left incisor, left  
30 | medial incisor, maxillary teeth, and canines; bilateral  
31 | pneumothoraces; a punctured lower lip; a lacerated tongue;  
32 | multiple lacerations to her arm, face, and lower extremities;  
33 | and optical and auditory damage, and

34 |       WHEREAS, those injuries necessitated extensive medical  
35 | treatment, rehabilitation, and restorative treatments, and

36 |       WHEREAS, litigation relating to this accident was begun  
37 | and, after two unsuccessful attempts at mediation, both parties  
38 | agreed to participate in binding arbitration, which took place  
39 | on December 18, 2000, and

40 |       WHEREAS, on December 20, 2000, the arbitration panel  
41 | awarded Bronwen Dodd \$275,000, which did not include any award  
42 | for past medical expenses, and

43 |       WHEREAS, after the arbitrators assessed 20-percent  
44 | negligence to Bronwen Dodd, her award was reduced to \$220,000,  
45 | and

46 |       WHEREAS, a final judgment in the amount of \$340,999.75 was  
47 | entered against the Escambia County School Board on May 21,  
48 | 2001, and

49 |       WHEREAS, the Escambia County School Board has paid to  
50 | Bronwen Dodd the sum of \$100,000, which is the statutory limit  
51 | pursuant to s. 768.28, Florida Statutes, and Bronwen Dodd is,  
52 | therefore, petitioning the Legislature for further reimbursement  
53 | in the amount of \$240,999.75, NOW, THEREFORE,

54 |

55 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

56 |

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

59           Section 2. The District School Board of Escambia County is  
60 authorized and directed to appropriate from funds of the school  
61 board not otherwise appropriated and to draw a warrant in the  
62 amount of \$240,999.75, which amount includes statutory  
63 attorney's fees and costs, payable to Bronwen Dodd as  
64 compensation for injuries and damages sustained as a result of  
65 the negligence of an employee of the school board.

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