HB 1931

2005

1	A bill to be entitled
2	An act relating to negligence; creating s. 768.0755, F.S.;
3	providing that a person seeking damages for a slip and
4	fall on a transitory foreign substance in a retail
5	establishment must prove that the retail establishment had
б	actual knowledge of the condition or constructive
7	knowledge of the condition; defining "constructive
8	knowledge"; providing that constructive knowledge may be
9	proven by circumstantial evidence; amending s. 768.81,
10	F.S.; redefining the term "negligence cases" as it relates
11	to comparative fault to include claims for negligent
12	security in which the defendant is sued for failing to
13	prevent the commission of an intentional tort; providing
14	that the apportionment of damages does not apply to any
15	action in which an intentional tortfeasor is sued and
16	seeks to apportion fault to a negligent tortfeasor;
17	repealing s. 768.0710, F.S., relating to the duty to
18	maintain premises in a reasonably safe condition for the
19	safety of business invitees; reenacting s. 25.077, F.S.,
20	relating to the duty of the clerk of court to report
21	certain information concerning negligence cases, to
22	incorporate the amendment made to s. 768.81, F.S., in a
23	reference thereto; providing an effective date.
24	
25	Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
26	
27	Section 1. Section 768.0775, Florida Statutes, is created
28	to read:
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29 768.0775 Premises liability for transitory foreign 30 substances in a retail establishment. -- If a person slips and 31 falls on a transitory foreign substance in a retail 32 establishment, the injured person must prove that the retail 33 establishment had actual knowledge of the dangerous condition or 34 had constructive knowledge of the dangerous condition in that the condition existed for a sufficient length of time that, in 35 the exercise of ordinary care, the retail establishment should 36 37 have known of the dangerous condition and taken action to remedy 38 it. Constructive knowledge may be proven by circumstantial evidence showing that the dangerous condition existed for such a 39 40 length of time that in the exercise of ordinary care the retail 41 establishment should have known of the condition. 42 Section 2. Subsection (4) of section 768.81, Florida 43 Statutes, is amended to read: 44 768.81 Comparative fault.--45 (4) APPLICABILITY.--This section applies to negligence cases. For purposes 46 (a) 47 of this section, the term "negligence cases" includes, but is not limited to, civil actions for damages based upon theories of 48 49 negligence, including negligent security resulting in the 50 commission of an intentional tort or criminal act; strict liability; - products liability; - professional malpractice 51 52 whether couched in terms of contract or tort; τ or breach of warranty and like theories. In determining whether a case falls 53 within the term "negligence cases," the court shall look to the 54 55 substance of the action and not the conclusory terms used by the 56 parties.

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57 (b) This section does not apply to any action brought by 58 any person to recover actual economic damages resulting from 59 pollution, to any action in which an intentional tortfeasor 60 seeks to apportion fault to a negligent tortfeasor based upon an 61 intentional tort, or to any cause of action as to which application of the doctrine of joint and several liability is 62 63 specifically provided by chapter 403, chapter 498, chapter 517, 64 chapter 542, or chapter 895.

65 Section 3. <u>Section 768.0710</u>, Florida Statutes, is 66 <u>repealed</u>.

67 Section 4. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
68 to section 768.81, Florida Statutes, in a reference thereto,
69 section 25.077, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

70 25.077 Negligence case settlements and jury verdicts; case 71 reporting. -- Through the state's uniform case reporting system, 72 the clerk of court shall report to the Office of the State Courts Administrator, beginning in 2003, information from each 73 74 settlement or jury verdict and final judgment in negligence 75 cases as defined in s. 768.81(4), as the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives deem necessary 76 77 from time to time. The information shall include, but need not 78 be limited to: the name of each plaintiff and defendant; the 79 verdict; the percentage of fault of each; the amount of economic 80 damages and noneconomic damages awarded to each plaintiff, 81 identifying those damages that are to be paid jointly and severally and by which defendants; and the amount of any 82 83 punitive damages to be paid by each defendant. 84 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005.

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