

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to Miami-Dade County; providing for the  
3           relief of Norka Laureiro; authorizing and directing Miami-  
4           Dade County to compensate Norka Laureiro for injuries  
5           sustained as a result of a collision caused by a Miami-  
6           Dade County bus; providing for a limitation on payment of  
7           fees and costs; providing an effective date.

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9           WHEREAS, on March 25, 1998, Norka Laureiro was transporting  
10          children in a private school van when she approached an  
11          intersection, and

12          WHEREAS, a Miami-Dade County bus ran a stop sign at the  
13          intersection and collided with Ms. Laureiro's van, which caused  
14          serious injuries to Ms. Laureiro and several children, and

15          WHEREAS, the driver of the Miami-Dade County bus had a  
16          significant history of driving citations and safety violations,  
17          and

18          WHEREAS, as a result of the collision, Ms. Laureiro  
19          suffered a crushing blow to her head which caused bone and nerve  
20          damage, and she underwent reconstructive surgery; however, Ms.  
21          Laureiro has permanent numbness on the right side of her face  
22          due to damaged cranial nerves, and

23          WHEREAS, Ms. Laureiro also suffered permanent injury to her  
24          Achilles tendon, several fractures to her right leg, and a  
25          subtalar joint dislocation to her right foot which required two  
26          major orthopedic surgeries, and because of the extent of the  
27          break to and fragmentation of the bone in her foot, surgery  
28          could not achieve complete alignment, and

29 WHEREAS, due to the resulting extensive arthritis and  
30 progressive nature of the injury, Ms. Laureiro is unable to use  
31 her foot normally, she will need additional surgeries in the  
32 future, her foot swells, she is in constant pain, and, as a  
33 result, Ms. Laureiro limps when she walks, which causes  
34 additional pain in her hips, back, and legs, and

35 WHEREAS, since the accident, Ms. Laureiro has been under  
36 the care of a neurologist for the nerve damage to her foot, leg,  
37 and face and she has also been on antidepressants since the  
38 collision, and

39 WHEREAS, before the accident, Ms. Laureiro owned her own  
40 business that involved driving children to and from school 5  
41 days a week, but due to the nature of her foot injury, she is  
42 unable to continue her driving business, and she has not worked  
43 since the accident, and

44 WHEREAS, on September 3, 2003, a jury from the Miami-Dade  
45 County Circuit Court returned a verdict in favor of Ms. Laureiro  
46 in the sum of \$1,550,685.38 and \$50,000 in favor of Ms.  
47 Laureiro's husband, Fredy Laureiro, for his loss of consortium,  
48 and

49 WHEREAS, Miami-Dade County appealed the verdict to the  
50 Third District Court of Appeal, and while the appeal was  
51 pending, the parties re-mediated the case and reached a  
52 settlement of \$1 million, and

53 WHEREAS, on March 29, 2005, the Circuit Court of the  
54 Eleventh Judicial Circuit issued a final consent judgment  
55 against Miami-Dade County in favor of Ms. Laureiro in the sum of  
56 \$1 million, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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

Section 2. Miami-Dade County is authorized and directed to appropriate from funds of the county not otherwise appropriated and to draw a warrant payable to Norka Laureiro in the amount of \$999,100 for injuries and damages sustained due to the negligence of the Miami-Dade County bus driver.

Section 3. This award is intended to provide the sole compensation for any and all present and future claims arising out of the factual situation in connection with the injury to Norka Laureiro. Not more than 25 percent of the award may be paid by the claimant for attorney's fees, lobbying fees, costs or other similar expenses.

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