

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act for the relief of Pierreisna Archille;
3 providing an appropriation to compensate Pierreisna
4 Archille, a mentally disabled person, by and through
5 Darlene Archille, Limited Guardian of Property for
6 Pierreisna Archille, for injuries and damages
7 sustained as a result of the negligence of employees
8 of the Department of Children and Family Services;
9 providing for reversion of funds; providing a
10 limitation on the payment of attorney's fees, lobbying
11 fees, costs, and other similar expenses relating to
12 the claim; providing an effective date.

13
14 WHEREAS, Pierreisna Archille, a 26-year-old moderately
15 retarded woman, has the cognitive ability of a child between
16 kindergarten and first-grade level, and

17 WHEREAS, because of allegations of neglect against her
18 biological mother and stepfather, Pierreisna Archille and her
19 sisters, Darlene and Muriel, were placed in foster care in 1993,
20 and

21 WHEREAS, in 1997, when Pierreisna Archille was 15 years
22 old, the Archille children were placed in the foster home of
23 Bonifacio and Josephine Velazquez, and

24 WHEREAS, the Velazquez foster home was licensed,
25 supervised, and monitored by the Department of Children and
26 Family Services and its employees and agents, and

27 WHEREAS, after placement of the Archille children in the
28 foster home, Darlene Archille complained that Bonifacio

29 Velazquez, the foster father, was sexually molesting her and was
 30 also molesting S.A., a toddler, and

31 WHEREAS, after these complaints were made, both Darlene and
 32 Muriel were removed from the Velazquez home, but Pierreisna
 33 Archille remained in the home, and

34 WHEREAS, between June of 1998 through June of 1999,
 35 Bonifacio Velazquez repeatedly raped and molested Pierreisna
 36 Archille, resulting in her impregnation and subsequent birth of
 37 a daughter, and

38 WHEREAS, after the birth of Pierreisna Archille's daughter,
 39 Takeisha, Pierreisna Archille's younger sister, Darlene, then 19
 40 years old, undertook the responsibility of helping Pierreisna
 41 Archille take care of her daughter, and

42 WHEREAS, as a developmentally disabled person, Pierreisna
 43 Archille is in need of funds necessary for her to care for her
 44 daughter with the assistance of her sister, Darlene, and

45 WHEREAS, Pierreisna Archille continues to suffer nightmares
 46 and extreme emotional and psychological trauma as a result of
 47 the actions giving rise to this claim, and

48 WHEREAS, a life-care continuum was formulated by
 49 comprehensive rehabilitation consultants detailing the funds
 50 necessary to provide treatment to Pierreisna Archille, as well
 51 as to help provide for the support necessary for Pierreisna
 52 Archille to take care of her daughter, and

53 WHEREAS, Dr. Fred Raffa, an economist, reduced such cost to
 54 present value in the amount of \$4,067,431, and

55 WHEREAS, the dependency court appointed a Limited Guardian
 56 of Property for Pierreisna Archille for the purpose of assisting

57 | in obtaining compensation for her damages, and
 58 | WHEREAS, a lawsuit was filed on behalf of the Limited
 59 | Guardian of Property for Pierreisna Archille in Naples, Florida,
 60 | against the Department of Children and Family Services, and

61 | WHEREAS, Pierreisna Archille, by and through her previous
 62 | Limited Guardian of Property, Patrick Weber, and the Department
 63 | of Children and Family Services agreed to mediation to resolve
 64 | this matter and entered into a settlement agreement to
 65 | compensate Pierreisna Archille for her damages and to provide a
 66 | basis for this claim bill, and

67 | WHEREAS, as a result of good faith negotiations between the
 68 | parties at a court-sanctioned mediation, the Department of
 69 | Children and Family Services and the Limited Guardian of
 70 | Property agreed that \$1.3 million is reasonable and fair
 71 | compensation for Pierreisna Archille's damages, and

72 | WHEREAS, the Department of Children and Family Services has
 73 | already paid \$100,000 in accordance with the provisions of s.
 74 | 768.28, Florida Statutes, and

75 | WHEREAS, with respect to the \$100,000 already paid by the
 76 | department, the appropriate parties agreed to deferred payment
 77 | of attorney's fees and costs of plaintiff's counsel so that
 78 | Pierreisna Archille could immediately have access to needed
 79 | funds, and

80 | WHEREAS, the Department of Children and Family Services
 81 | supports a claim bill in the amount of \$1.2 million, NOW,
 82 | THEREFORE,

83 |

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

85
86 Section 1. The facts stated in the preamble to this act
87 are found and declared to be true.

88 Section 2. (1) There is appropriated from the General
89 Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and Family Services
90 the sum of \$1.2 million for the relief of Pierreisna Archille,
91 by and through Darlene Archille, Limited Guardian of Property
92 for Pierreisna Archille, for injuries and damages sustained.
93 After payment of attorney's fees and costs, lobbying fees, and
94 other similar expenses relating to this claim as provided for in
95 this section, outstanding medical liens, and other immediate
96 needs, the remaining funds shall be placed in a special needs
97 trust created for the exclusive use and benefit of Pierreisna
98 Archille. Any funds remaining in the special needs trust upon
99 the death of Pierreisna Archille, after payment of any
100 outstanding Medicaid liens, shall revert to the General Revenue
101 Fund of the State of Florida.

102 (2) Any amount awarded under this act pursuant to the
103 waiver of sovereign immunity permitted under s. 768.28, Florida
104 Statutes, and this award is intended to provide the sole
105 compensation for all present and future claims arising out of
106 the factual situation described in the preamble to this act
107 which resulted in the injury to Pierreisna Archille. The total
108 amount paid for attorney's fees, lobbying fees, costs, and other
109 similar expenses relating to this claim may not exceed 25
110 percent of the amount awarded under subsection (1).

111 Section 3. The Chief Financial Officer is authorized and
112 directed to draw a warrant in the sum of \$1.2 million payable to

HB 223

2009

113 Pierreisna Archille, by and through Darlene Archille, Limited
114 Guardian of Property for Pierreisna Archille, upon funds in the
115 State Treasury to the credit of the Department of Children and
116 Family Services, and the Chief Financial Officer is directed to
117 pay the same out of such funds in the State Treasury not
118 otherwise appropriated.

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