

House Bill No. 1553

An act relating to Palm Beach County; providing for the relief of Elizabeth Menendez; providing for an appropriation to compensate Elizabeth Menendez for injuries and damages sustained as a result of the negligence of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, in the early morning hours of July 4, 1990, Elizabeth Menendez, then 22 years of age, was operating a motor vehicle on the highways of Palm Beach County, and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth Menendez was attempting to make a left turn at Southern Boulevard and I-95 with the intention of going onto the southbound ramp and proceeding to her residence in Palm Springs, and

WHEREAS, at that time, a vehicle being pursued by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department at speeds of approximately 100 miles per hour struck the vehicle that Elizabeth Menendez was operating, and

WHEREAS, in the resulting head-on collision, Elizabeth Menendez sustained serious and permanent injuries, and

WHEREAS, the injuries sustained by Elizabeth Menendez as a result of the accident that occurred on July 4, 1990, formed the basis of legal action against the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department (Case No. CL 93-2544 AO), and

WHEREAS, on October 21, 1998, in the Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit in and for Palm Beach County, Carlos Menendez and Teresita Menendez, as guardians of Elizabeth Menendez, entered into a settlement agreement with the Sheriff of Palm Beach County, and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff of Palm Beach County has paid \$100,000 to Carlos and Teresita Menendez, as legal guardians of Elizabeth Menendez, for the use and benefit of Elizabeth Menendez, pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreement, and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff of Palm Beach County actively supports the passage by the Florida Legislature of a relief act in the amount of \$2,400,000 on behalf of Carlos Menendez and Teresita Menendez, as legal guardians of Elizabeth Menendez, for the use and benefit of Elizabeth Menendez, NOW, THEREFORE,

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. The Sheriff of Palm Beach County is authorized and directed to appropriate from funds of the sheriff's department not otherwise appropriated and to draw a warrant in the sum of \$2,400,000 payable to Carlos

Menendez and Teresita Menendez, as legal guardians of Elizabeth Menendez, for the use and benefit of Elizabeth Menendez, to compensate Elizabeth Menendez for injuries and damages sustained. Such funds shall be disbursed in accordance with the settlement agreement signed in October 1998.

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

Approved by the Governor June 5, 2000.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 5, 2000.