

By: Senator(s) Doxey

To: Judiciary, Division A;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2087

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 99-36-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REVISE THE NUMBER OF VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATORS AUTHORIZED TO
3 BE HIRED BY THE COUNTIES AND DISTRICT ATTORNEYS; AND FOR RELATED
4 PURPOSES.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 99-36-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 99-36-7. (1) (a) In addition to the full-time legal
9 assistants to the district attorney authorized by Section 25-31-5,
10 the district attorney in each circuit court district in this state
11 shall * * * employ one (1) person to serve at the will and
12 pleasure of the district attorney as a "victim assistance
13 coordinator" who shall not be considered to be a state employee.

14 (b) The District Attorney of the First Circuit Court
15 District shall appoint one (1) additional victim assistance
16 coordinator * * * for a total of two (2) victim assistance
17 coordinators.

18 (2) The duty of the victim assistance coordinator is to
19 ensure that a victim, guardian of a victim, or close relative of a
20 deceased victim is afforded the rights granted victims, guardians
21 and relatives by Section 99-36-5. The victim assistance
22 coordinator shall work closely with appropriate law enforcement
23 agencies, prosecuting attorneys, the state and the judiciary in
24 fulfilling that duty.

25 (3) The salary of the victim assistance coordinator shall
26 not exceed the salary authorized for criminal investigators in
27 Section 25-31-10, and shall be paid jointly by the counties
28 comprising the circuit court district, with each county paying a

29 pro rata share of the salary as determined by the senior circuit
30 court judge.

31 (4) The board of supervisors of any county, with the
32 approval of and upon the order of the senior circuit court judge
33 of the district wherein such county lies, may, in addition to any
34 victim assistance coordinator provided for in subsection (1) of
35 this section, hire any number of county victim assistance
36 coordinators, each of whom shall not be considered to be a state
37 employee. The duty of the county victim assistance coordinator
38 shall be to cooperate with local law enforcement agencies, the
39 county attorney and the district attorney in assuring that a
40 victim, guardian or close relative is afforded the rights granted
41 by Section 99-36-5. Two (2) or more counties, by action of their
42 respective boards of supervisors * * * may join in establishing
43 and maintaining the position of victim assistance coordinator to
44 serve these counties. Any municipality, by action of its
45 governing authority, may participate in the establishment and
46 maintenance of a county victim assistance coordinator's office
47 located within the municipality.

48 (5) Any district attorney, county board of supervisors or
49 governing authority of a municipality which has established or is
50 participating in the maintenance of an office of victim assistance
51 coordinator may apply through the Governor's Office of State and
52 Federal Programs for a grant under the federal "Victims of Crimes
53 Act of 1984" (Public Law 98-473) to be used in the continued
54 operation of the victim assistance program.

55 **SECTION 2.** The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi
56 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,
57 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the
58 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States
59 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the
60 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
61 extended.

62 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
63 and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting
64 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.