

By: Senator(s) Davis

To: Judiciary, Division A;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2648

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 99-36-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 AUTHORIZE EMPLOYMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL VICTIM ASSISTANCE  
3 COORDINATOR IN THE SEVENTEENTH CIRCUIT COURT DISTRICT; AND FOR  
4 RELATED 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, subject to the approval of and upon the order of the senior  
12 circuit court judge of the district, employ one (1) person to  
13 serve at the will and pleasure of the district attorney as a  
14 "victim assistance coordinator" who shall not be considered to be  
15 a state employee.

16 (b) The District Attorneys of the First and Seventeenth  
17 Circuit Court Districts may each appoint one (1) additional victim  
18 assistance coordinator \* \* \* for a total of two (2) victim  
19 assistance coordinators, subject to the approval of and upon the  
20 order of the senior circuit court judge of the district.

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

28           (3) The salary of the victim assistance coordinator shall  
29 not exceed the salary authorized for criminal investigators in  
30 Section 25-31-10, and shall be paid jointly by the counties  
31 comprising the circuit court district, with each county paying a  
32 pro rata share of the salary as determined by the senior circuit  
33 court judge.

34           (4) The board of supervisors of any county, with the  
35 approval of and upon the order of the senior circuit court judge  
36 of the district wherein such county lies, may, in addition to any  
37 victim assistance coordinator provided for in subsection (1) of  
38 this section, create the position of county victim assistance  
39 coordinator. The duty of the county victim assistance coordinator  
40 shall be to cooperate with local law enforcement agencies, the  
41 county attorney and the district attorney in assuring that a  
42 victim, guardian or close relative is afforded the rights granted  
43 by Section 99-36-5. Two (2) or more counties, by action of their  
44 respective boards of supervisors, with the approval of and upon  
45 the order of the senior circuit court judge of the district  
46 wherein such counties lie, may join in establishing and  
47 maintaining the position of victim assistance coordinator to serve  
48 these counties. Any municipality, by action of its governing  
49 authority, may participate in the establishment and maintenance of  
50 a county victim assistance coordinator's office located within the  
51 municipality.

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

59           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
60 and after July 1, 2007.