

Senate Bill 79

By: Senator Unterman of the 45th

AS PASSED

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT**

1 To amend Chapter 15 of Title 17 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 victim compensation, so as to increase the amount payable for funeral expenses; to enlarge
3 the pool of claimants to include individuals related by marriage; to provide for related
4 matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 Chapter 15 of Title 17 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to victim
8 compensation, is amended by revising subparagraph (a)(1)(E) and paragraph (1) of
9 subsection (b) of Code Section 17-15-7, relating to persons eligible for awards, as follows:

10 "(E) Is a dependent spouse, ~~or parent, step-parent,~~ child, ~~or step-child~~ of a person who
11 is injured physically, who dies, or who suffers financial hardship as a result of being
12 injured physically as a direct result of a crime;"

13 "(b)(1) Victims may be legal residents or nonresidents of this state. A surviving spouse,
14 parent, ~~or step-parent,~~ child, ~~or step-child~~ who is legally dependent for his or her principal
15 support upon a deceased victim shall be entitled to file a claim under this chapter if the
16 deceased victim would have been so entitled, regardless of the residence or nationality
17 of the surviving spouse, parent, ~~or step-parent,~~ child, ~~or step-child.~~"

18 **SECTION 2.**

19 Said chapter is further amended by revising paragraph (2) of subsection (c) and subsection
20 (j) of Code Section 17-15-8, relating to required findings and amount of award, as follows:

21 "(2) No award under this chapter for the following losses shall exceed the maximum
22 amount authorized:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Maximum Award</u>
24 Lost wages	\$ 10,000.00
25 Funeral expenses	3,000.00 <u>6,000.00</u>

26	Financial hardship or loss of support	10,000.00
27	Medical	15,000.00
28	Counseling	3,000.00
29	Crime scene sanitization	1,500.00"

30 "(j) In any case where a crime results in death, the spouse, ~~children,~~ parents, ~~or~~
31 step-parents, children, step-children, siblings, or step-siblings of such deceased victim may
32 be considered eligible for an award for the cost of psychological counseling which is
33 deemed necessary as a direct result of said criminal incident. The maximum award for said
34 counseling expenses shall not exceed \$3,000.00 for each claimant identified in this
35 subsection."

36 **SECTION 3.**

37 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
38 without such approval.

39 **SECTION 4.**

40 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.