

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act for the relief of Willie Neville Davidson.*

3 [H 1379]

4 Approved

5 Whereas, on December 3, 1980, Willie Neville Davidson (Mr. Davidson) was arrested in the city of
6 Norfolk, Virginia, and charged with statutory burglary, rape, and two counts of sodomy; and

7 Whereas, Mr. Davidson was incarcerated from that time through the time of his trial; and

8 Whereas, Mr. Davidson pled not guilty to all of the charges and maintained his innocence throughout
9 the trial; and10 Whereas, on May 27, 1981, Mr. Davidson was convicted after a bench trial in the Circuit Court of
11 the City of Norfolk of rape, burglary, and two counts of forcible sodomy; and12 Whereas, on July 14, 1981, Mr. Davidson was sentenced to serve a term of 20 years in the state
13 penitentiary; and14 Whereas, Mr. Davidson was paroled in 1992 after serving approximately 11 and one-half years in
15 prison; and16 Whereas, subsequent to Mr. Davidson's release from prison, DNA tests were conducted on a
17 sampling of biological evidence contained in files for cases between 1973 and 1988, prior to the
18 availability of DNA testing; and19 Whereas, DNA testing of the biological material contained in Mr. Davidson's case file excluded him
20 as a suspect in the crimes for which he was convicted; and21 Whereas, on December 7, 2005, after reviewing the results and evidence from the trial, John R.
22 Doyle, III, the attorney for the Commonwealth for the City of Norfolk made a written request to
23 Governor Mark Warner to grant an absolute pardon to Mr. Davidson; and24 Whereas, Mr. Doyle stated in the request that he was convinced beyond any question that the results
25 exonerated Mr. Davidson from involvement in the offenses; and

26 Whereas, on December 22, 2005, Governor Warner granted Mr. Davidson an absolute pardon; and

27 Whereas, Mr. Davidson has also suffered severe physical, emotional, and psychological damage as a
28 result of his incarceration and has no other means to obtain adequate relief except by action of this
29 body; now, therefore,30 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**31 1. § 1. That there shall be paid for the relief of Willie Neville Davidson from the general fund of the
32 state treasury, upon execution of a release and waiver forever releasing (i) the Commonwealth or any
33 agency, instrumentality, officer, employee, or political subdivision thereof, (ii) any legal counsel
34 appointed pursuant to § 19.2-159 of the Code of Virginia, and (iii) all other parties of interest from any
35 present or future claims he may have against such enumerated parties in connection with the aforesaid
36 occurrence, the sum of \$168,775 to be paid to Willie Neville Davidson on or before August 1, 2006, by
37 check issued by the State Treasurer on warrant of the Comptroller.

ENROLLED

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