SLS 16RS-433 **ENGROSSED**

2016 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 320

BY SENATORS MORRELL, BARROW AND COLOMB AND REPRESENTATIVE **JACKSON**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. Provides for designated seating in a courtroom. (8/1/16)

1	AN ACT

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2 To amend and reenact R.S. 46:1844(G), relative to rights of crime victims and witnesses; to 3 provide for the rights of family of crime victims; to provide for designated courtroom seating; to provide for separation of certain individuals; and to provide for related 4 5 matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 46:1844(G) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §1844. Basic rights for victim and witness

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G. The victim and witness in the court setting. The court shall provide, whenever possible, a secure waiting area during court proceedings which does not require victims, witnesses, or homicide victims' families to be in close proximity to the defendants, or their families or friends, and shall provide a secure waiting area in cases involving violent crimes. Upon request of a party, the court shall also provide, if possible, designated seating in a courtroom for victims, victim's family, and witnesses separate from any defendant, defendant's family, or witness for a defendant. The designated seating area should be positioned,

whenever possible, in the courtroom in a way that does not require victims,

victim's family, and witnesses to be in close proximity to any defendant,

defendant's family, or witness for a defendant.

* * *

Section 2. This Act shall be known and may be referred to as "The Jason Fourmy

Act".

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Ashley E. Menou.

DIGEST 2016 Regular Session

SB 320 Engrossed

Morrell

<u>Present law</u> requires courts, when possible, to provide a secure waiting area during court proceedings for victims, witnesses, or homicide victim's families that does not require them to be in close proximity to the defendants, or their families or friends. Provides a court must without exception provide a secure waiting area in cases involving violent crimes.

<u>Proposed law</u> retains <u>present law</u> and provides that upon request of a party and if possible, the court must also provide designated seating in a courtroom for victims, victims' family, and witnesses that does not require them to be in close proximity to defendants, defendants' family, or witnesses for the defendant.

Effective August 1, 2016.

(Amends R.S. 46:1844(G))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Judiciary B to the original bill

1. Adds requirement that a party request designated seating in a courtroom.