

**Call or write Florida Senators
in support of
Senate Bill 658 – Closing Argument**

Florida is one of only three states that do not give the State final closing arguments in all criminal cases. The State has the high burden of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. In criminal cases, defense lawyers often come up with novel arguments in closing and often have a radically different view of the evidence from that of the prosecutor.

Allowing the State to give final closing argument would give the prosecutor an opportunity to correct any misrepresentations or errors and answer the defense arguments. The defense attorney can virtually say anything in closing argument and the State has no remedy. The State cannot appeal a conviction no matter how grave the error, because of the prohibition against double jeopardy. The defense can always appeal improper closing argument by the State and obtain a reversal if the prosecutor is wrong.

This is not a bad bill for the defense. One of the toughest choices defense lawyers face is whether or not to introduce evidence and lose their right to final closing argument. Too many defense lawyers forgo introducing evidence, counting on their oratory skills, which is often the wrong decision. A criminal trial should be a search for the truth and the defense should bring all credible evidence to the trial so the jury can reach the right decision. The bill cures these problems and will result in better justice for all.

Rep. Dick Kravitz, Jacksonville, has introduced this bill and Sen. Steve Wise is its sponsor in the Senate. We urge you to call the Senators listed below and voice your support for this bill.

MEMBER	PHONE
Dan Webster, Chair	850/487-5047
Alex Villalobos, Vice Chair	850/487-5130
Dave Aronberg	850/487-5356
Carey Baker	850/487-5100
Walter "Skip" Campbell	850/487-5094
Charlie Clary	850/487-5009
Steven Geller	850/487-5097
Bill Posey	850/487-5053

**NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS'
RIGHTS WEEK
ANNUAL AWARDS NOMINATION FORM
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA
THEME: "Victims' Rights: Strength in Unity"
APRIL 23 – 29, 2006**

The Mayor's Victim Assistance Advisory Council (VAAC) will sponsor the 20th annual observation of National Victims' Rights Week in Jacksonville. Individuals and organizations that have demonstrated outstanding achievements on behalf of crime victims and victims' rights will be recognized. The Mayor's VAAC will present victims' rights awards in the following categories:

- 1) COURAGEOUS VICTIM** – A victim of crime who has shown the courage to speak out and make a difference regarding fair treatment of victims in the criminal justice system and in our community.
- 2) OUTSTANDING VICTIM ADVOCATE** – A person or organization that has demonstrated excellence, compassion, and dedication in working for the welfare of victims, improvement of victims' services, and protection of victims' rights.
- 3) JUDICIAL VICTIM ADVOCATE** – An individual (prosecutor, judge, or other judicial professional) who has demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to victims' rights.
- 4) LAW ENFORCEMENT VICTIM ADVOCATE** – An individual (police officer, correctional officer or other professional) who has demonstrated sensitivity and responsiveness to victims' rights.
- 5) MEDIA** – An individual, corporation or organization that has demonstrated respect for the dignity of victims of crime and sensitivity to victim issues.

A VAAC Selection Committee will choose the winner in each category. **Winners will be honored at our annual awards event during Victims' Rights Week.** Persons submitting nominations *may* be contacted for additional information and/or to present the awards.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please submit a nomination form for the one most outstanding candidate of your choice in one category on the back side of this official nomination form. You may nominate more than one person. Please complete a separate nomination form for each person. Your Nominee can be a paid professional, a volunteer, or an organization. Include at least two (2) of the following general areas of consideration in your nomination:

- Uniqueness of Contribution
- Impact of Service on/in the Community
- Amount of Time Spent on this Achievement

DEADLINE: FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2006

Direct all inquiries to:

Kathy Pannell at 630-1764 or Dr. Shannon H. Perry at 630-6300.
2006 VICTIMS' RIGHTS AWARD OFFICIAL NOMINATION FORM
APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 14, 2006

AWARD CATEGORY (check one):

- Courageous Victim: Outstanding Victim Advocate:
 Judicial Victim Advocate: Law Enforcement Victim Advocate: Media:

Name of Nominee: _____

Agency: _____ Phone: _____

Position: _____ Years of Service: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Name of Nominator: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Nominee Reference & Phone: _____

Nominee Reference & Phone: _____

*A nominee reference is an additional witness to the nominee's performance.

Mail or e-mail return Nomination Form to: Attention:
Dr. Shannon H. Perry, VAAC Coordinator
403 West 10th Street, Jacksonville, FL 32206
Phone: 630-6300/Fax: 630-0770/Vaac@coj.net
Application must be received by April 14, 2006

Nominee's Qualifications: (Use additional sheets if necessary. Add nominee's name on each additional sheet.)

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