

1 HB199  
2 126771-1  
3 By Representatives Beckman, Jones, Boman, Long, Sanderford,  
4 Williams (J), Holmes, McClammy, Hubbard (J), England, Faust,  
5 Brown and Givan  
6 RFD: Judiciary  
7 First Read: 08-MAR-11

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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, a court may conduct  
9 certain pretrial proceedings in criminal cases by  
10 means of audio-video telecommunications, but there  
11 is no law specifically authorizing pretrial matters  
12 in civil cases to be conducted in this manner.

13 This bill would authorize the presiding  
14 judge of the circuit court to authorize motion  
15 hearings in civil matters to be conducted by  
16 telephone or other audio-video telecommunications  
17 means.

18 This bill would also provide that the  
19 presiding judge would establish written guidelines  
20 for the holding of the hearings.

21  
22 A BILL  
23 TO BE ENTITLED  
24 AN ACT

25  
26 To authorize the presiding circuit judge of each  
27 judicial circuit to create guidelines providing for certain

1 pretrial proceedings in civil cases to be conducted by  
2 telephone conferencing or other audio-video telecommunications  
3 means.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

5 Section 1. (a) The presiding judge of each circuit  
6 court may authorize pretrial motion hearings in civil matters  
7 in the circuit to be conducted by telephone conferencing or  
8 other audio-video telecommunications means. The presiding  
9 judge shall develop and publish procedures for the conduct of  
10 the hearings in the circuit.

11 (b) The telephone or audio-video telecommunications  
12 device used in the hearing shall enable the judge and all  
13 parties to converse simultaneously with each other.

14 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the  
15 first day of the third month following its passage and  
16 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.