

By Senator Bronson

18-822A-99

See HB

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the placement of rip current
3 warning signs; providing a short title;
4 creating s. 380.275, F.S.; providing for a
5 cooperative effort among state agencies and
6 local governments to plan for and assist in the
7 placement of rip current warning signs;
8 providing that the Department of Community
9 Affairs shall direct and coordinate the
10 program; requiring the development of a uniform
11 rip current warning sign; authorizing the
12 department to coordinate the location,
13 distribution, and erection of rip current
14 warning signs; providing for rules; limiting
15 the liability of participating governmental
16 entities; providing an effective date.

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18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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20 Section 1. This act may be cited as the
21 "McGriff-Mannix Act" in honor of James McGriff and Brian
22 Mannix, who lost their lives as a result of rip currents.

23 Section 2. Section 380.275, Florida Statutes, is
24 created to read:

25 380.275 Beaches and coastal areas; posting of rip
26 current warning signs.--

27 (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that a
28 cooperative effort among state agencies and local governments
29 be developed to plan for and assist in the placement of rip
30 current warning signs along the public beaches and coastal
31 areas of the state. A rip current is a strong surface current

1 of water flowing out past the surf zone which can pull even
2 the strongest swimmer into deeper water. Rip currents pose a
3 significant danger of drowning to tourists and the public, and
4 it is therefore important to warn the public to be cautious in
5 coastal areas where rip currents can occur.

6 (2) The Department of Community Affairs, through the
7 Florida Coastal Management Program, shall direct and
8 coordinate the rip current warning sign program, which shall
9 be a program to require the placement of rip current warning
10 signs in areas that pose a significant risk to the public as a
11 result of rip currents. Signs shall be located where the
12 public has established an access way to a beach or coastal
13 area.

14 (3) The department shall develop a uniform rip current
15 warning sign for use at any public beach or along any coastal
16 area where there may be a significant threat to the public as
17 a result of rip currents, to be placed, insofar as is
18 practicable, wherever the public has established access ways
19 to the beach.

20 (4) The department shall, within the limits of
21 appropriations available to it for such purposes, establish
22 and operate a program to fund the placement of rip current
23 warning signs in areas where the public has established an
24 access way to a beach or coastal area that may be subject to a
25 significant threat of dangerous rip currents and therefore may
26 pose a hazard to the public. The department shall coordinate
27 efforts to determine the locations that local governments
28 consider appropriate for placement of rip current warning
29 signs. For these locations, the department shall make rip
30 current warning signs available to the governing body of any
31 county or municipality in such quantity as is determined by

1 the department. The department shall also coordinate with the
2 local governing body the distribution and erection of rip
3 current warning signs, wherever there is a request for such
4 assistance.

5 (5) The department may adopt such rules and forms as
6 are necessary to carry out the purposes of this section and to
7 ensure that all projects to which assistance is rendered under
8 this section are for the purpose of providing and erecting rip
9 current warning signs.

10 (6) The state, state agencies, local governments, and
11 local government agencies shall not be held liable for any
12 injury caused by the placement or maintenance of rip current
13 warning signs or the failure to install or maintain rip
14 current signs as provided by this section.

15 Section 3. This act shall take effect October 1, 1999.

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18 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

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20 Provides for a cooperative effort among state agencies
21 and local governments to plan for and assist in the
22 placement of rip current warning signs, under the
23 direction of the Department of Community Affairs.
24 Requires the development of a uniform rip current warning
25 sign and authorizes the department to coordinate the
26 location, distribution, and erection of such signs.
27 Limits the liability of participating governmental
28 entities.

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