

HB 1021

2004

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Hillsborough County; designating the
3 S.S. American Victory as the official flagship of
4 Hillsborough County; providing an effective date.

5
6 WHEREAS, construction of the 455-foot S.S. American Victory
7 was completed on June 20, 1945, at the California Shipbuilding
8 Yard in Los Angeles, California, and

9 WHEREAS, this ship sailed the Pacific Ocean during the
10 final days of World War II, supplying America's war effort and
11 assisting in ferrying military equipment and troops back to the
12 United States, and

13 WHEREAS, after the war, the S.S. American Victory, under
14 the auspices of the Marshall Plan and the United Nations, sailed
15 the world delivering foodstuffs, manufacturing machinery, and
16 raw materials to countries devastated by the destruction caused
17 by World War II, and

18 WHEREAS, during the Korean War and the Vietnam War, the
19 S.S. American Victory transported cargo, fuel, and ammunition to
20 these areas from ports in the United States and elsewhere, and

21 WHEREAS, following service during the Vietnam War, the S.S.
22 American Victory was deactivated on October 24, 1969, and placed
23 in the James River Reserve Fleet located on the James River near
24 Norfolk, Virginia, and

25 WHEREAS, the S.S. American Victory was withdrawn from the
26 James River Reserve Fleet on March 13, 1985, to participate in a
27 government-sponsored Victory Ship Validation Program, a program
28 designed to gauge the time and expense necessary to activate
29 mothballed Victory-class ships, which enabled the S.S. American

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30 Victory to be brought to full operational status and to perform
 31 sea trials after a \$2.5-million restoration, and

32 WHEREAS, in June 1985, the S.S. American Victory sailed for
 33 26 hours before returning to its anchorage in the James River
 34 Reserve Fleet, where it remained until 1999, and

35 WHEREAS, in 1998, Congress authorized the conveyance of the
 36 S.S. American Victory to the Tampa-based organization, the
 37 Victory Ship, Inc., and, in 1999, the ship was towed from
 38 Virginia to Tampa for major renovation and reactivation, and

39 WHEREAS, in 2000, the S.S. American Victory was relocated
 40 to its permanent home in Tampa Bay adjacent to the Florida
 41 Aquarium where it has undergone additional restoration and
 42 reactivation through more than 85,000 volunteer hours and \$4
 43 million of privately raised money, and

44 WHEREAS, the S.S. American Victory serves as the American
 45 Victory Mariners Memorial and Museum Ship, berthed at the Ybor
 46 Turning Basin in Hillsborough County, and

47 WHEREAS, in September 2003, the S.S. American Victory
 48 conducted its first "Relive History Cruise" with over 500
 49 passengers and crew, NOW THEREFORE,

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

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53 Section 1. The victory ship S.S. American Victory is
 54 designated as the official flagship of Hillsborough County.

55 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.