

By Senator Geller

31-615-04

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to abrogating offensive or  
3           derogatory place names; creating s. 267.0625,  
4           F.S.; providing legislative findings that  
5           certain place names are offensive or  
6           derogatory; providing definitions; requiring  
7           the Florida Historical Commission and the  
8           Division of Historic Resources to aid state  
9           agencies and local governments in identifying  
10          geographic sites having offensive or derogatory  
11          place names; directing state agencies and local  
12          governments to identify geographic sites having  
13          offensive or derogatory place names by a  
14          specified date; directing the commission to  
15          recommend to the division replacement names;  
16          directing the division to select replacement  
17          names by a specified date; requiring state and  
18          local governments to update maps and markers  
19          with the new place names; directing the  
20          division to notify the United States Board of  
21          Geographic Names of name changes; providing  
22          specified exceptions to the act; providing an  
23          effective date.

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

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27           Section 1. Section 267.0625, Florida Statutes, is  
28           created to read:29           267.0625 Abrogation of offensive and derogatory  
30           geographic place names.--

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1           (1) The Legislature finds that certain place names for  
2 geographic sites are offensive or derogatory to the state's  
3 people, history, and heritage. The state encourages tolerance  
4 and understanding between all of its residents and these  
5 geographic place names are a barrier to that effort. The  
6 Legislature finds that these offensive or derogatory place  
7 names should be replaced by names that reflect the state's  
8 people, history, and heritage without resorting to offensive  
9 stereotypes, names, words, or phrases.

10           (2) As used in this section, the term:

11           (a) "Commission" means the Florida Historical  
12 Commission within the Department of State.

13           (b) "Geographic site" means a location or structure in  
14 this state, and includes, but is not limited to, rivers,  
15 bodies of water, roads, bridges, buildings, geographic  
16 features, and parks.

17           (c) "Offensive or derogatory place name" means a name  
18 deemed offensive on the basis of race, religion, creed,  
19 gender, sexual orientation, or national origin.

20           (3) The commission shall assist the division in  
21 consulting with state agencies and political subdivisions in  
22 order to identify and inventory all public lands, waters,  
23 structures, and other geographic sites having offensive or  
24 derogatory place names. The commission shall also assist the  
25 division in developing alternative names to replace offensive  
26 or derogatory place names with place names that reflect the  
27 state's diversity and culture.

28           (4)(a) Each state agency that owns or manages public  
29 land, waters, or structures in this state shall, by October 1,  
30 2004, identify any geographic sites under its jurisdiction  
31 which contain offensive or derogatory place names and inform

1 the commission of those geographic sites. The commission  
2 shall, by January 1, 2005, recommend to the division a new  
3 name for each geographic site to replace the offensive or  
4 derogatory place name. The division shall, by March 1, 2005,  
5 choose a new name for the geographic site. Thereafter, the  
6 agency shall ensure that whenever the agency updates a map or  
7 replaces a sign, interpretive marker, or any other marker  
8 because of wear or vandalism, the offensive or derogatory  
9 place name is removed and replaced with the name chosen by the  
10 division.

11 (b) Each political subdivision that owns or manages  
12 public land, waters, or structures in this state shall, by  
13 October 1, 2004, identify any geographic sites under its  
14 jurisdiction which contain offensive or derogatory place names  
15 and inform the commission of those sites. The political  
16 subdivision shall at the same time recommend a replacement  
17 name. The commission shall, by January 1, 2005, recommend to  
18 the division a new name for each geographic site to replace  
19 the offensive or derogatory place name, giving preference to  
20 the name suggested by the political subdivision. The division  
21 shall, by March 1, 2005, choose a new name for the geographic  
22 site. Thereafter, the political subdivision shall ensure that  
23 whenever it updates a map or replaces a sign, interpretive  
24 marker, or any other marker because of wear or vandalism, the  
25 offensive or derogative place name is removed and replaced  
26 with the name chosen by the division.

27 (5) The division shall:

28 (a) Notify the Department of Transportation, the  
29 Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development, the  
30 Department of Management Services, and any other entity that  
31 compiles information for or develops maps or markers for the

1 state of the name change so that it may be reflected on  
2 subsequent editions of any maps, informational literature, or  
3 markers produced by those entities; and

4 (b) Place a formal request with the United States  
5 Board on Geographic Names to render a decision on the proposed  
6 name change so that the new name will be reflected on all maps  
7 of the United States Board on Geographic Names.

8 (6) This section does not apply to a geographic place  
9 name that is the same as the name of a historic person or  
10 event or that is a nonpejorative place name.

11 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

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14 SENATE SUMMARY

15 Requires the Florida Historical Commission and the  
16 Division of Historic Resources to aid state agencies and  
17 local governments in inventorying geographic sites for  
18 offensive or derogatory place names. Directs state  
19 agencies and local governments to identify geographic  
20 sites with offensive and derogatory place names by a  
21 specified date. Directs the commission to recommend to  
22 the division replacement names. Directs the division to  
23 select replacement names by a specific date. Requires  
24 state and local governments to update maps and markers  
25 with the new place names. Directs the division to notify  
26 the United States Board of Geographic Names of name  
27 changes. Specifies exceptions to the act.  
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