

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to abrogating offensive or derogatory place names; creating s. 267.0625, F.S.; providing legislative findings that certain place names are offensive or derogatory; providing definitions; requiring the Florida Historical Commission and the Division of Historical Resources to aid state agencies and local governments in identifying geographic sites having offensive or derogatory place names; directing state agencies and local governments to identify geographic sites having offensive or derogatory place names by a specified date; directing the commission to recommend to the division replacement names; directing the division to select replacement names by a specified date; requiring state and local governments to update maps and markers with the new place names; directing the division to notify the United States Board on Geographic Names of name changes; providing specified exceptions to the act; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 267.0625, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

267.0625 Abrogation of offensive and derogatory geographic place names.--

(1) The Legislature finds that certain place names for geographic sites are offensive or derogatory to the state's people, history, and heritage. The state encourages tolerance

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30 and understanding between all of its residents and these  
 31 geographic place names are a barrier to that effort. The  
 32 Legislature finds that these offensive or derogatory place names  
 33 should be replaced by names that reflect the state's people,  
 34 history, and heritage without resorting to offensive  
 35 stereotypes, names, words, or phrases.

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

37 (a) "Commission" means the Florida Historical Commission  
 38 within the Department of State.

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

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

46 (3) The commission shall assist the division in consulting  
 47 with state agencies and political subdivisions in order to  
 48 identify and inventory all public lands, waters, structures, and  
 49 other geographic sites having offensive or derogatory place  
 50 names. The commission shall also assist the division in  
 51 developing alternative names to replace offensive or derogatory  
 52 place names with place names that reflect the state's diversity  
 53 and culture.

54 (4)(a) Each state agency that owns or manages public  
 55 lands, waters, or structures in this state shall, by October 1,  
 56 2004, identify any geographic sites under its jurisdiction which  
 57 contain offensive or derogatory place names and inform the  
 58 commission of those geographic sites. The commission shall, by

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59 January 1, 2005, recommend to the division a new name for each  
 60 geographic site to replace the offensive or derogatory place  
 61 name. The division shall, by March 1, 2005, choose a new name  
 62 for the geographic site. Thereafter, the agency shall ensure  
 63 that whenever the agency updates a map or replaces a sign,  
 64 interpretive marker, or any other marker because of wear or  
 65 vandalism, the offensive or derogatory place name is removed and  
 66 replaced with the name chosen by the division.

67 (b) Each political subdivision that owns or manages public  
 68 land, waters, or structures in this state shall, by October 1,  
 69 2004, identify any geographic sites under its jurisdiction which  
 70 contain offensive or derogatory place names and inform the  
 71 commission of those sites. The political subdivision shall at  
 72 the same time recommend a replacement name. The commission  
 73 shall, by January 1, 2005, recommend to the division a new name  
 74 for each geographic site to replace the offensive or derogatory  
 75 place name, giving preference to the name suggested by the  
 76 political subdivision. The division shall, by March 1, 2005,  
 77 choose a new name for the geographic site. Thereafter, the  
 78 political subdivision shall ensure that whenever it updates a  
 79 map or replaces a sign, interpretive marker, or any other marker  
 80 because of wear or vandalism, the offensive or derogatory place  
 81 name is removed and replaced with the name chosen by the  
 82 division.

83 (5) The division shall:

84 (a) Notify the Department of Transportation, the Office of  
 85 Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development, the Department of  
 86 Management Services, and any other entity that compiles  
 87 information for or develops maps or markers for the state of the

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88 name change so that it may be reflected on subsequent editions  
89 of any maps, informational literature, or markers produced by  
90 those entities.

91 (b) Place a formal request with the United States Board on  
92 Geographic Names to render a decision on the proposed name  
93 change so that the new name will be reflected on all maps of the  
94 United States Board on Geographic Names.

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

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