

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 131 State Symbols

SPONSOR(S): Attkisson

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 230

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) <u>Committee on Tourism & Trade</u>	<u>6 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>McGill</u>	<u>Hoagland</u>
2) <u>Economic Expansion & Infrastructure Council</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
3) <u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
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5) <u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

HB 131 designates the Florida Cracker Horse as the official state horse. Current law provides 34 state designations (i.e., animal, beverage, shell, stone, butterfly, etc.); however, Florida does not have a state designated horse. A repeal date of July 1, 2018 is provided, unless reviewed and reenacted by the legislature before that date.

This bill takes effect July 1, 2008.

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state or local governments.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

This bill does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Current Situation

Chapter 15, F.S., designates 34 official state symbols including an official state animal, butterfly and reptile¹. Chapter 15 does not contain a designation for an official state horse.

The Florida Cracker Horse's history in Florida dates back to the 1500s when its ancestors were imported by Spanish explorers. The explorers brought horses that carried the genes of the North African Barb, Spanish Sorraia, and Spanish Jennet. These animals spread throughout the region and developed into the modern breed of the Florida Cracker Horse. By the 18th and 19th centuries cattle ranching had become big business in Florida, and the Cracker Horse was a popular choice among farmers and cattlemen².

The Cracker Horse population became endangered in the 20th Century as a result of methods used to eliminate the fever tick, and the trend of using larger horses by ranchers. In 1930, John Law Ayers, a prominent rancher and state politician caught a group of wild cracker horses and provided for the continuation of the breed. Along with his efforts and the efforts of other families the Cracker Horse survived.

The names of these families now represent the lineages of the Cracker Horses: Ayers, Harvey, Bronson, Matchett, Partin, and Whaley. The three main lines left are: Ayers, Harvey, and Bronson. There are currently 800 registered Cracker Horses. Cracker Horses are described as between 13.2 and 15.2 hands high at the withers and weighing between 700 and 1000 pounds. The neck is well defined with a narrow chest. Solid colors and greys are very common. The hooves are tough and handle marshy areas well, because of this the breed is known as a Marshtackie in the Carolinas³.

Proposed Changes

The bill designates the Florida Cracker Horse (Marshtackie) as the official state horse and provides a repeal date of July 1, 2018.

¹ These are: the state motto, seal, flag, fruit, tree, beverage, citrus archive, shell, stone, gem, wildflower, play, animal, freshwater fish, saltwater fish, marine mammal, saltwater mammal, butterfly, reptile, air fair, rodeo, festival, moving image center and archive, litter control symbol, pageant, opera program, renaissance festival, railroad museums, transportation museum, soil, fiddle contest, band, Sports Hall of Fame, pie, and maritime museum.

² <http://www.ecmagazine.net/spring07/floridacrackerhorse.htm>

³ <http://www.ecmagazine.net/spring07/floridacrackerhorse.htm>

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1 creates s. 15.0526 F.S., designating the Florida Cracker Horse as the official state horse and provides a repeal date of July 1, 2018.

Section 2 provides the bill will take effect July 1, 2008.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

This bill does not create, modify, amend, or eliminate a state revenue source.

2. Expenditures:

This bill does not create, modify, amend, or eliminate state expenditures.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None. This bill does not create, modify, amend, or eliminate a local revenue source.

2. Expenditures:

None. This bill does not create, modify, amend, or eliminate a local expenditure.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

This bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds. This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities. This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities have to raise revenue.

2. Other:

None.

3. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

4. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

5. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES