

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 147 Transportation Facility Designations
SPONSOR(S): Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee, Tuck
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee	16 Y, 0 N, As CS	Walsh	Keating
2) Infrastructure & Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Commerce Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Under current law, the Legislature may designate a transportation facility, such as a bridge, interchange, or portion of a road, for honorary or memorial purposes or to distinguish a particular facility. Legislative designations do not change the official names of the facilities. The Department of Transportation (DOT) erects markers for each designation, but may not do so until the appropriate city or county commission passes a resolution in support of the designation.

The bill honors fallen law enforcement officers by designating “Deputy William J. Gentry Jr., Highway” and “Sergeant Eric John Twisdale Memorial Interchange.” Under the bill, DOT must erect suitable markers for the road designations.

The bill will have an insignificant negative fiscal impact to the State Transportation Trust Fund associated with erecting suitable markers for the road designations. The cost can be absorbed within DOT’s existing resources.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2022.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Transportation Facility Designations

Under current law, the Legislature may designate a transportation facility, such as a bridge, interchange, or portion of a road, for honorary or memorial purposes or to distinguish a particular facility. Legislative designations do not change the official names of the designated facilities, and do not require local governments or private entities to change street signs, mailing addresses, or 911 emergency telephone-number system listings to account for the designations.¹

Current law sets standards for the naming of state buildings and other facilities. The law provides that except as specifically provided by law, state buildings, roads, bridges, parks, recreational complexes, and other similar facilities may not be named for a living person.²

Road Markers

The Department of Transportation (DOT) must place a marker at each terminus or intersection of a designated road, bridge, or other transportation facility and erect other markers it deems appropriate for the facility.³ Road markers may not be erected until the appropriate city or county commission passes a resolution in support of a particular designation. Additionally, if a designated facility extends through multiple cities or counties, a resolution must be passed by each affected local government before the road markers can be erected by DOT.⁴

Deputy William J. Gentry, Jr.

Deputy William J. Gentry, Jr., served with the Highlands County Sheriff's Office for 13 years in various capacities, including time on patrol, the K-9 Unit, the Special Investigations Unit, and as a field training deputy.⁵ On May 6, 2019, Deputy Gentry and the deputy he was training responded to an animal abuse call in Highlands County. Deputy Gentry attempted to make contact with the suspect, who opened fire on Deputy Gentry. On May 7, 2019, Deputy Gentry succumbed to his injuries at the age of 40.⁶

Sergeant Eric John Twisdale

Sergeant Eric John Twisdale served with the Clay County Sheriff's Office in various capacities for 22 years and previously served with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.⁷ Sergeant Twisdale received the Sheriff's Office's Lifesaving Award in 2014 after he saved someone from drowning, and he was recognized as Deputy of the Year in 2015 for "displaying exceptional valor."⁸ Sergeant Twisdale passed away on August 19, 2020, after contracting COVID-19 due to a presumed exposure at the Clay County Sheriff's Office.⁹

Effect of the Bill

¹ S. 334.071(1), F.S.

² S. 267.062(1), F.S.

³ S. 334.071(2), F.S.

⁴ S. 334.071(3), F.S.

⁵ Legacy.Com, *William J Gentry, Jr.*, <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/william-gentry-jr-obituary?pid=188976004> (last visited Nov. 22, 2021).

⁶ Officer Down Memorial Page, *Deputy Sheriff William Jackson Gentry, Jr.*, <https://www.odmp.org/officer/23672-deputy-sheriff-william-jackson-gentry-jr> (last visited Nov. 22, 2021).

⁷ Officer Down Memorial Page, *Sergeant Eric John Twisdale*, <https://www.odmp.org/officer/24909-sergeant-eric-john-twisdale> (last visited Nov. 29, 2021).

⁸ Dan Scanlan, *Remembered as 'a cop's cop,' Clay County sergeant laid to rest after COVID-19 death*, jacksonville.com (Sept. 24, 2020), <https://www.jacksonville.com/story/news/crime/2020/09/24/sgt-eric-twisdale-remembered-cops-cop-funeral/3515087001/> (last visited Nov. 29, 2021).

⁹ Officer Down Memorial Page, *supra* note 7.

Under the bill, that portion of U.S. 98 between Haywood Taylor Boulevard and Lakeview Boulevard in Highlands County is designated as “Deputy William J. Gentry, Jr., Highway.” The bill also designates the interchange at S.R. 23/First Coast Expressway and Henley Road in Clay County as “Sergeant Eric John Twisdale Memorial Interchange.” The bill requires DOT to erect suitable markers for the road designations.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Designates “Deputy William J. Gentry Jr., Highway” and “Sergeant Eric John Twisdale Memorial Interchange.”

Section 2: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2022.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

DOT estimates a cost of \$1,040 for the appropriate markers for each designation, which provides for two signs per designation at \$520 per sign. Therefore, the bill has an estimated negative fiscal impact of \$2,080 to the State Transportation Trust Fund. This cost can be absorbed within existing DOT resources.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill does not require or authorize rulemaking.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On December 2, 2021, the Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee adopted a strike-all amendment to the bill and reported the bill favorably as a committee substitute. The amendment added the designation of "Sergeant Eric John Twisdale Memorial Interchange" in Clay County and directs DOT to erect suitable markers.

This analysis is drafted to the committee substitute as approved by the Tourism, Infrastructure & Energy Subcommittee.