

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

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**BILL #:** [HB 575](#)

**TITLE:** The Designation of the Gulf of Mexico

**SPONSOR(S):** Sirois

**COMPANION BILL:** [SB 608](#) (DiCeglie)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

## Committee References

[Government Operations](#)

13 Y, 4 N



[State Affairs](#)

16 Y, 7 N

## SUMMARY

### **Effect of the Bill:**

The bill aligns the Florida Statutes with the federal designation of the “Gulf of America” by replacing references to the “Gulf of Mexico” with “Gulf of America.”

### **Fiscal or Economic Impact:**

The state and local governments may experience an insignificant, negative fiscal impact associated with updating official documents, websites, signage, and publications to reflect the new designation. These expenses are expected to be absorbed within existing budgetary allocations.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill aligns Florida Statutes with the recent federal designation of the “Gulf of America” in [Executive Order 14172—Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness](#)—by replacing references to the “Gulf of Mexico” with “Gulf of America.”<sup>1</sup> (Multiple Sections)

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2025. (Section [54](#))

### **FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

#### STATE GOVERNMENT:

The state may experience an insignificant, negative fiscal impact from updating official documents, websites, signage, publications, and other materials to reflect the new designation change from “Gulf of Mexico” to “Gulf of America.” However, any additional costs would likely be absorbed within existing resources.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Local governments may experience an insignificant, negative fiscal impact from updating official documents, websites, signage, publications, and other materials to reflect the new designation change from “Gulf of Mexico” to “Gulf of America.” However, any additional costs would likely be absorbed within existing resources.

<sup>1</sup> The only instance in which the name “Gulf of Mexico” is not being changed to “Gulf of America” in the Florida Statutes is when it appears in references to the case *In re: Oil Spill by the Oil Rig “Deepwater Horizon” in the Gulf of Mexico, on April 20, 2010*, MDL No. 2179 (E.D. La.), which maintains the accuracy of the legal citation. See ss. [288.8012\(4\)](#) and [288.80125\(1\), F.S.](#)

**STORAGE NAME:** h0575c.SAC

**DATE:** 3/20/2025

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

#### [Executive Order 14172—Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness](#)

On January 20, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed an Executive Order directing the U.S. Secretary of the Interior<sup>2</sup> to rename the “Gulf of Mexico” as the “Gulf of America.”<sup>3</sup> This includes updating the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS),<sup>4</sup> revising federal maps and documents, and ensuring that all references across federal agencies reflect the new designation.

The renaming was framed as a recognition of the Gulf’s economic, historical, and strategic significance to the United States. The order highlighted several key aspects of the Gulf’s national importance, including:

- **Energy production:** The Gulf region produces approximately 14 percent of the nation’s crude oil and remains one of the most prolific oil and gas basins in the world. Its deep-water reservoirs have spurred advancements in energy exploration and extraction technologies.
- **Fisheries:** The Gulf supports some of the most productive fisheries in the world, ranking second in commercial fishing landings by volume in the U.S. Its waters are home to species such as snapper, shrimp, grouper, and stone crab, which contribute millions of dollars to local economies.
- **Maritime and port infrastructure:** The Gulf of America is a critical hub for U.S. maritime industries, with some of the largest and busiest ports in the world.
- **Tourism and recreation:** The region is a popular destination for American tourism, boating, and recreational fishing, further contributing to the economy.<sup>5</sup>

#### Florida State Agency Action

On March 5, 2025, the Governor and Cabinet<sup>6</sup> sitting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (IITF)<sup>7</sup> issued a resolution directing all state agencies, divisions, and personnel under its jurisdiction to update maps, records, publications, and resources to reflect the new designation.<sup>8</sup> The resolution also mandates that administrative rules, policies, and procedures be updated on a continual basis and authorizes the adoption of rules specifically for this purpose. Additionally, all land managers of publicly accessible state-owned lands bordering the Gulf must designate suitable locations for signage recognizing the name change.

State agencies have also begun to take steps to implement the name change from the “Gulf of Mexico” to the “Gulf of America.” For example, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) announced that it would adopt the Gulf of America designation across all commission materials, documents, rules, maps, forms, and resources.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has ordered that all

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<sup>2</sup> The Secretary of the Interior is the head of the U.S. Department of the Interior, a federal executive department responsible for managing the nation’s public lands, natural resources, and relations with Native American tribes. The Secretary oversees agencies such as the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and plays a key role in implementing policies related to conservation, energy development, and land management. See U.S. Department of the Interior, [About Interior](#) (last visited March 2, 2025).

<sup>3</sup> [Executive Order 14172](#) (2025). The Gulf of America is the U.S. Continental Shelf area bounded by the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to the north and extending to the seaward boundaries of Mexico and Cuba. It is the largest gulf in the world with 1,700 miles of U.S. coastline and containing nearly 160 million acres of water.

<sup>4</sup> The GNIS is the federal standard for geographic nomenclature in the U.S., developed by the U.S. Geological Survey in cooperation with the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. It serves as the official repository of domestic geographic names data, ensuring uniformity across federal agencies. See U.S. General Services Administration, [Geographic Names Information System \(GNIS\) – USGS National Map Downloadable Data Collection](#) (last visited March 2, 2025).

<sup>5</sup> See [Executive Order 14172](#) (2025).

<sup>6</sup> The Cabinet is composed of the Attorney General, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Commissioner of Agriculture. [Art. IV, s. 4\(a\), FLA. CONST.](#)

<sup>7</sup> The IITF is a constitutional fund dedicated to managing and protecting state-owned lands and their revenues. The IITF supports land acquisition, conservation, and environmental management. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP’s) Division of State Lands serves as the primary administrative agency supporting the trustees. [Art. IV, s. 4\(f\), FLA. CONST.](#); ch. 253, F.S.; see also DEP, [Division of State Lands](#) (last visited March 3, 2025).

<sup>8</sup> DEP, [Item 1A – Resolution – Gulf of America](#) (last visited March 2, 2025).

<sup>9</sup> FWC, [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Implements Name Change to “Gulf of America”](#) (last visited March 2, 2025).

departmental administrative rules, forms, maps, and resources be updated to reflect the new name.<sup>10</sup> These efforts aim to align state agencies with the federal renaming initiative and ensure uniformity across government references.

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## BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Government Operations Subcommittee</a>	13 Y, 4 N	3/11/2025	Toliver	Villa
<a href="#">State Affairs Committee</a>	16 Y, 7 N	3/20/2025	Williamson	Villa

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<sup>10</sup> FDACS, [Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson Directs FDACS to Implement Name Change to 'Gulf of America'](#) (last visited March 2, 2025).