



A group formed to protect Pipping's legacy had asked the FDOT about placing the monument, which would be mounted on a larger base honoring all branches of the service from World War II, in the rest area off of the westbound lanes of I-4 near Auburndale. The concept is not new. A rest area on Interstate 85 near Lexington, N.C., houses a monument to residents of that state who died in the Vietnam War. It is maintained by the North Carolina Vietnam Veterans. At another rest area on I-95 near the Virginia border is a Blue Star monument to those who died in World War II and Korea, said Bill Jones of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. It, too, is maintained by a private group and does not cost the state any money in maintenance.<sup>1</sup>

Section 256.13, F.S., requires FDOT to fly the POW-MIA flag year round at each of the rest areas along interstate highways.

Section 267.074, F.S., directs the Division of Historical Resources of the Department of State to coordinate the State Historical Marker Program to inform the general public about persons, events, structures, and other topics relating to the history and culture of the state. FDOT is authorized to permit and assist the division in erecting and maintaining said historic signs or markers within the right-of-way of any state highway, county road, or municipal street, or any other property under its jurisdiction and control. The division is vested with the exclusive authority and power to erect and maintain said historic signs or markers within the right-of-way of any state highway.

Section 479.02 requires the FDOT to implement a rest area information panel or devices program at rest areas along the interstate highway system and the federal-aid primary highway system to promote tourist-oriented businesses. Section 479.28, F.S., allows FDOT to contract with private persons for the construction, erection, and maintenance of the rest area information panels or devices.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

Section 1 establishes the popular name of the act, the “Ellwood Robinson ‘Bob’ Pipping, Jr., Memorial Act.”

Section 2 declares the purpose of the act to be the creation of an environment allowing Floridians and visitors to be reminded of the accomplishments and sacrifices made by military veterans.

Section 3 authorizes FDOT to enter contracts with any group or organization for the installation and maintenance of monuments and memorials honoring military veterans at highway rest areas. Proposals would be approved by a committee composed of:

- the Secretary of the FDOT (or designee),
- the Executive Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (or designee),
- three members of the Florida Commission on Veterans Affairs (appointed by the chair).

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<sup>1</sup> Bill Ruffy, *Stargel Bill Would Bring Back Iwo Jima Monument to I-4*, The Ledger, March 23, 2004, at <http://www.theledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20040323/NEWS/403230354/1134>.

Installations may be monuments, memorials, plaques, markers, or various retired military equipment. The sponsoring group is responsible for all costs of the monument, its installation, and the cost of maintenance for a period of 10 years. Maintenance costs are to be deposited into an account held by FDOT. Alternatively, the sponsoring group may post a bond equal to the cost of removal of the installation should it fail to provide sufficient maintenance funds for two consecutive years.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Voluntary sponsorship of a monument or memorial will require the sponsoring entity to provide maintenance costs of indeterminate amounts.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Amendments:**

#1 by Transportation: The amendment clarifies a requirement of the sponsoring organization to provide maintenance funds annually and allows for the 10-year bond securing the cost of removal to be renewed for another 10-year period.

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This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.

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