

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the General Government Appropriations Committee

BILL: CS/SB 198

INTRODUCER: Banking and Insurance Committee and Senator Justice and others

SUBJECT: Firefighter Memorial Flag

DATE: March 19, 2009 **REVISED:** _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Messer	Burgess	BI	Favorable
2.	Murphy	Yeatman	CA	Fav/CS
3.	Frederick	DeLoach	GA	Favorable
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

Please see Section VIII. for Additional Information:

A. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE..... Statement of Substantial Changes

B. AMENDMENTS..... Technical amendments were recommended

Amendments were recommended

Significant amendments were recommended

I. Summary:

This bill requires the Division of State Fire Marshal within the Department of Financial Services (department) to design, create, and distribute an official state firefighter memorial flag. The bill grants the Department of Financial Services authority to adopt rules relating to the production and distribution of the flag. The flag will honor firefighters who have died in the line of duty and it may be displayed at fire stations, firefighter memorials, funeral services, and otherwise as the State Fire Marshal deems proper. The bill mandates a specific design for the flag which includes the Great Seal of the State of Florida and the phrase "Florida Fallen Firefighters" over a blue background.

There is currently in existence a national firefighter memorial flag. The flag required by this bill will be exclusive to Florida.

The \$1,200 cost associated with the implementation of this bill will be absorbed within the existing budget of the Division of State Fire Marshal, within the Department of Financial Services.

This bill creates an undesignated section of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The Division of State Fire Marshal is the lead agency for Florida's fire service and is charged with the duty of certifying firefighters, assisting with fire related forensic and investigation activities, and other aspects of protecting Florida from fire related perils.

Between 2000 and 2005, 21 Florida firefighters were killed in the line of duty.¹ Memorial services for fallen firefighters traditionally include a ceremonial placement of an American flag over the coffin of the fallen firefighter. Presently, there is not a unique and separate memorial flag for fallen firefighters that has been state sponsored in Florida. However, there presently exists a National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Flag that is used in several states in a similar manner as the flag that is described in this bill. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation in Emmitsburg, Maryland currently offers these National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Flags. The flags can be purchased on their website for about \$75 each.²

Research indicates that only one state, Pennsylvania, has a state specific fallen firefighter flag. The Pennsylvania flag is used in funeral proceedings and it is flown below an American flag at half mast after a firefighter has died in the line of duty.³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 requires the Division of the State Fire Marshal to design, produce, and implement the creation and distribution of the Firefighter Memorial Flag, specifies the locations at which the flag may be displayed, and specifies the design of the flag. This section provides that the flag may be displayed at fire stations, firefighter memorials, funeral services, and otherwise as the State Fire Marshal deems proper. Additionally, the department is granted the authority to adopt rules relating to the production and distribution of the flag.

Section 2 provides that the effective date of the bill shall be July 1, 2009.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

¹ Florida Department of Financial Services Division of State Fire Marshal website: http://www.fldfs.com/SFM/FFFWallMemorial_ChronList.htm (last visited on Mar. 4, 2009)

² National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Website: <http://www.firehero.org/index3.aspx?categoryid=57> (last visited on Mar. 4, 2009)

³ Pennsylvania Line of Duty Death Protocol: http://www.osfc.state.pa.us/osfc/lib/osfc/PA_LODD_Funeral_Protocol.pdf (last visited on Mar. 4, 2009).

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The flags may be available for the private sector to purchase through private vendors.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Department of Financial Services estimates that the fiscal impact of this bill will be \$1,200.⁴ However, the department indicates that this cost will be absorbed within the department's existing budget.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Banking and Insurance Committee on February 19, 2009:

The committee substitute grants the Department of Financial Services authority to adopt rules concerning the production and distribution of the Firefighter Memorial Flag.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

⁴ Department of Financial Services Bill Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement, January 27, 2009, on file with the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.