

PROVIDING FOR REGULATION OF SIGNS IN MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA

A RESOLUTION

Whereas the Florida Keys' flora, fauna and marine life is unique in North America, and whereas The Everglades National Park, John Pennekamp Coral Reef and Looe Key State Parks, Key Deer and Great White Heron refuge areas are designated protection areas for the above, and whereas Indian Key, Lignum Vitae Key, Long Key, Bahia Honda and Fort Zachary Taylor State Parks attract thousands of tourists annually, it is vital that every effort be made to preserve and protect the health and scenic beauty of Monroe County, which is the Florida Keys.

Whereas, this protected island chain has been designated an "Area of Critical Concern", because of the ecologically sensitive and delicate areas' balance of nature, the citizens of Monroe County must be caretakers of this 107 mile fragile chain of islands.

Whereas, the United Nations recently proclaimed the Florida Keys to be one of the "Most Unique Areas of the World, with its scenic beauty and multitude of unusual wildlife", along with the famed Galapagos. This should further encourage us to preserve our uniqueness of nature and eliminate unsightly structures and distractions, including billboards/signs.

Whereas, the Federal Government has spent millions of dollars rebuilding 48 bridges linking this island chain, and whereas the Federal Government is currently spending millions of dollars widening and four-laning U.S. 1 throughout Monroe County for all travelers of the Country to enjoy this unique climate and scenic view on a year-round basis.

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court, and a majority of State Supreme Courts, have found and upheld "Sign Board Controls and elimination of signs not only in areas of Scenic Beauty, but in municipalities with aesthetic interest in community appearance". Each of these is consistent with our projected ordinance.

Whereas, the Florida Supreme Court has ruled in favor of the cases involving a number of Florida municipalities, declaring, "that Highway Beautification and Billboard removal, for the sake of aesthetics alone, is an idea whose time has come."

Whereas, the citizens of Monroe County are not just singling out large and unsightly signs, but are working in other areas such as renovating store fronts along U.S. 1 at great personal expense, coordinating beautification projects with Chambers of Commerce, Garden Clubs, civic groups such as Marathon's Community Development Corporation, artists are assisting on renditions of buildings, and Florida D.O.T. reviews its extensive planting program with citizens of each area as such planning progresses.

In Conclusion

Whereas, our uniqueness of setting gives us "just cause" to protect our appearance and preserve the character of our natural habitat; We, the members of the Monroe County Highway Beautification Committee hereby resolve and recommend to the Monroe County Commissioner (with our rights under FL statute 125.0102 providing for regulation of signs and for repeal of certain Monroe County code of ordinance sections) be adopted as it is worded, since (in the Lee County case) it has already been upheld by the Florida Supreme Court.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Monroe County Highway Beautification Committee recommends to the Monroe County Commission that the proposed Monroe County Sign Ordinance be adopted in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the

Monroe County Highway Beautification Committee

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