

## Congress to SEALs museum: "official"

Senate joins House in passing bill recognizing Fort Pierce museum

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(WASHINGTON) - The move to grant federal recognition for Fort Pierce's Navy UDT-SEAL Museum gained unanimous support from the U.S. Senate late Wednesday, moving it one step closer to becoming a national museum.

Sponsored by U.S. Rep. Tim Mahoney and Sen. Bill Nelson, the legislation designates the Fort Pierce museum as the nation's only official museum dedicated to preserving the history of the Navy SEALs, one of the U.S. military's most elite fighting forces. The recognition will allow the museum to qualify for federal grants, increase its historical collections and attract more recognition.

"This will put a national spotlight on the museum and help it showcase its collections to thousands more visitors," said Nelson.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to the Navy SEALs and their predecessors. This bill will help the museum tell these heroes' stories to a national audience," said Congressman Mahoney.

Fort Pierce has long been recognized as the birthplace of the SEALs, dating back to World War II when the Navy trained thousands of frogmen there in underwater and combat demolition. The beachside museum was opened in 1985 and educates visitors about the history and exploits of naval special warfare from WWII through today's Iraq conflict and the nation's war on terror.

The legislation now heads to the president for his approval.

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