

By Senator Thompson

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1 Senate Memorial

2 A memorial to the Congress of the United States,
3 urging Congress to recognize the month of June each
4 year as "Caribbean American Heritage Month."

5
6 WHEREAS, from a region that conjures images of a scenic
7 paradise, Caribbean Americans are as vibrant as the islands from
8 which they come, possessing a wealth of talent and history that
9 reverberates throughout this great state and nation, and

10 WHEREAS, emigration from the Caribbean region to the
11 American colonies began as early as 1619, with the arrival of
12 indentured workers in Jamestown, Virginia, and since 1820,
13 millions of people have emigrated from the Caribbean region to
14 the United States, and

15 WHEREAS, as educators, authors, community leaders and
16 activists, musicians, and politicians, Caribbean Americans have
17 made their mark on every facet of our society and have
18 contributed to the betterment and diversity of our state and
19 nation, and

20 WHEREAS, counted among the many famous sons and daughters
21 of the Caribbean are activist W.E.B. Du Bois; Secretary of the
22 Treasury Alexander Hamilton; the first African-American
23 Secretary of State Colin Powell; actress Cicely Tyson; actor
24 Sidney Poitier, the first African-American actor to receive the
25 Academy Award for best actor in a leading role; author, poet,
26 and civil rights activist James Weldon Johnson; musician, actor,
27 and activist Harry Belafonte; athlete Roberto Clemente, the
28 first Latino inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame;
29 and numerous others who have displayed great strength and

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30 resiliency while serving as pioneers among the people of the
31 Caribbean, and

32 WHEREAS, the modern political influences of Caribbean
33 Americans are evident in the election of former member of the
34 Florida House of Representatives, Jennifer Carroll of Trinidad
35 and Tobago, as Florida's first Caribbean American Lieutenant
36 Governor; the election of former Maryland Lieutenant Governor
37 Anthony G. Brown, who is of Jamaican descent; and the continued
38 representation in local, state, and national governments by
39 members from the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, Haiti, Jamaica,
40 and other Caribbean nations, and

41 WHEREAS, in June 2005, the United States House of
42 Representatives unanimously adopted a concurrent resolution
43 recognizing the significance of Caribbean people and their
44 descendants in the history and culture of the United States and
45 observing the month of June as "Caribbean American Heritage
46 Month," and

47 WHEREAS, on February 14, 2006, the United States Senate
48 unanimously passed the resolution, culminating a two-year
49 bicameral effort, and

50 WHEREAS, since the passage of the resolution in 2005, the
51 White House has issued an annual proclamation recognizing June
52 as "Caribbean American Heritage Month," exemplifying the
53 importance of this observance across the nation, and

54 WHEREAS, the United States of America has thrived as a
55 country of immigrants, united by common values and the promise
56 of a better tomorrow, NOW, THEREFORE,

57
58 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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60 That the Congress of the United States is urged to
61 recognize the month of June each year as "Caribbean American
62 Heritage Month" as a celebration of our shared past with the
63 Caribbean region, intertwined present, and inextricably linked
64 future, as well as the strength, diversity, and richness that
65 Caribbean Americans have woven into the fabric of this nation.

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
67 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
68 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
69 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
70 the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.