

By Representatives Albright, King, Thrasher, Sembler and Smith

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House Memorial

A memorial to the President of the United States supporting in part and opposing in part the nomination of the entire St. Johns River for federal designation as an American Heritage River.

WHEREAS, the American Heritage Rivers Initiative is a program created by Executive Order 13061, and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13061 states that the American Heritage Rivers Initiative has the objectives of natural resource and environmental protection, economic revitalization, and historic and cultural preservation, and

WHEREAS, an application was submitted by the City of Jacksonville on December 7, 1997, to designate the entire St. Johns River, a river stretching 310 miles in length, an American Heritage River, and

WHEREAS, the primary point of contact for the nominating organization resides in Duval County, and

WHEREAS, the St. Johns River runs through 12 counties and numerous diverse communities with different environmental, economic, cultural, and recreational concerns and needs, and

WHEREAS, numerous county commissions and state and federal legislators representing certain counties along the St. Johns River south of Duval County have expressed their opposition to designating the entire St. Johns River as an American Heritage River, and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government provides limited options for those counties to opt out of an American Heritage River designation, and

1 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that the American
2 Heritage Rivers Initiative is intended to be a locally driven
3 initiative, taking into account the desires of the local
4 communities and local representatives, and

5 WHEREAS, the Legislature finds it appropriate for the
6 primary nominating party to submit an application for that
7 stretch of the river starting at the southern Duval County
8 line and running north to the Atlantic Ocean, but
9 inappropriate for the primary nominating party to include
10 counties south of Duval County without their full support, and

11 WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that the American
12 Heritage Rivers Initiative allows for the nomination of two or
13 more noncontiguous segments of a river, NOW, THEREFORE,

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15 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 That the Florida House of Representatives supports the
18 application to designate a portion of the St. Johns River as
19 an American Heritage River for that portion starting at the
20 southern Duval County line and running north to the Atlantic
21 Ocean, excluding those areas lying within the Sixth
22 Congressional District.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida House of
24 Representatives opposes the inclusion of counties south of
25 Duval County in that application, and therefore, opposes
26 federal designation as an American Heritage River of any
27 stretch of river running through those counties unless such
28 counties have submitted an application on their own behalf.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
30 dispatched to the President of the United States.

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