

By Representative Roberts-Burke

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution honoring Florida Memorial College.

3
4 WHEREAS, in 1879, a group of humble, far-sighted
5 members of the Bethlehem Baptist Association, under the
6 leadership of the Reverend J. N. Stokes, met in Live Oak,
7 Florida, to establish an academy for the training of
8 African-American children, and

9 WHEREAS, this group had been promised organizational
10 and financial assistance from an agency which came to be known
11 as the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the school
12 they founded was named the Florida Baptist Institute, and

13 WHEREAS, in 1892, another group of Baptists, which
14 included Reverend M. W. Gilbert, Reverend J. T. Brown, and
15 Sarah A. Blocker of Bethel Institute Baptist Church in
16 Jacksonville, sought and obtained financial assistance from
17 the American Baptist Home Mission Society to establish the
18 Florida Baptist Academy in Jacksonville, and

19 WHEREAS, the Florida Baptist Academy developed into a
20 flourishing elementary and secondary educational institution,
21 and

22 WHEREAS, in 1900, while serving as faculty at the
23 Jacksonville campus, brothers J. Rosamond Johnson and James
24 Weldon Johnson composed the song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing,"
25 now known as the Negro National Anthem, and

26 WHEREAS, in 1914, the Florida Baptist Academy was
27 declared one of eight of the 26 private schools in the state
28 that played an important part in the educational activities of
29 the State of Florida, and

30 WHEREAS, in order to continue its growth and expansion
31 as well as to give instruction in farming and gardening, the

1 decision was made in 1918 to move the Florida Baptist Academy
2 to a large tract of land in St. Augustine, and

3 WHEREAS, it was in St. Augustine, with the inclusion
4 within the academy's curriculum of "normal training courses,"
5 that the Florida Baptist Academy became a junior college,
6 changing its name to the Florida Normal and Industrial
7 Institute, and

8 WHEREAS, in 1931, Florida Normal and Industrial
9 Institute was accredited as a junior college by the Southern
10 Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Florida
11 Department of Education, and

12 WHEREAS, 10 years later, the Florida Normal and
13 Industrial Institute merged with its sister institution, the
14 Florida Baptist Institute of Live Oak, and a four-year degree
15 program was instituted, and

16 WHEREAS, the institution's charter was amended and in
17 1944 its name was changed to Florida Normal and Industrial
18 College, and

19 WHEREAS, in 1963, the charter of the college was again
20 amended and its name was changed to Florida Memorial College,
21 and

22 WHEREAS, in 1968, the college moved from St. Augustine
23 to Miami, and

24 WHEREAS, in 1979, Florida Memorial College celebrated
25 its 100th anniversary, and 1998 marks its 30th anniversary in
26 Miami, and

27 WHEREAS, today, as one of the 40 member institutions of
28 the The College Fund/United Negro College Fund, Florida
29 Memorial College continues its proud tradition as a
30 historically Black, Baptist-affiliated college, providing

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1 students with quality education and helping to create
2 tomorrow's leaders today, and

3 WHEREAS, it is fitting and appropriate that the House
4 of Representatives honors one of the oldest academic centers
5 in the State of Florida, NOW, THEREFORE,

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7 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
8 Florida:

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10 That the House of Representatives of the State of
11 Florida hereby honors Florida Memorial College for more than a
12 century of dedication and commitment to academic excellence in
13 the State of Florida.

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