

By Senator Kurth

15-1877-00

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Senate Resolution No. ____

A resolution designating April 4, 2000, as
"Puerto Rico Day" in Florida.

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico is a self-governing island and
commonwealth of the United States discovered by Christopher
Columbus on November 19, 1493, and colonized by the Spaniards
during the 16th century, and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico and Florida have a relationship
dating back to 1513, when Ponce de Leon, Puerto Rico's first
governor, embarked on a voyage to explore the New World and
came upon a bountiful land he called "La Florida," and

WHEREAS, Puerto Rico became part of the United States
in 1898 at the end of the Spanish-American War; on March 2,
1917, the Jones Act was signed declaring all Puerto Ricans to
be citizens of the United States, sharing in the full rights
and duties of citizens; and the island was granted
commonwealth status in 1952, and

WHEREAS, Puerto Ricans have fought in every major war
and conflict of the United States, from World War I to the
conflict in Bosnia, and have exhibited outstanding heroic
action at a very high cost, for Puerto Rico has the highest
per-capita military combat death rate of any state in the
Union, with more than 20,000 having given their lives in
battle, and

WHEREAS, today trade between the state and the
commonwealth amounts to more than \$2.5 billion annually, and
many Puerto Ricans, eager to explore the opportunities offered
by the state's robust economy, continue to come both from
abroad and from other states to join the more than 400,000

1 individuals from Puerto Rico who already make their homes in
2 Florida, and

3 WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the ties between
4 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the State of Florida be
5 recognized, taking note of the positive impact made on the
6 economic and cultural growth of the state, NOW, THEREFORE,

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8 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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10 That the Florida Senate pauses in its deliberations to
11 acknowledge the enrichment of the state's diverse culture
12 afforded by the presence of its Floridians of Puerto Rican
13 heritage and to wholeheartedly designate April 4, 2000, as
14 "Puerto Rico Day" in Florida.

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