

By Representative C. Smith

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution supporting and urging the transfer
3 of "King," a male silverback gorilla, from
4 Monkey Jungle in Miami to Zoo Atlanta.

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6 WHEREAS, "King," a 30-year-old western lowland male
7 silverback gorilla, was taken from the wilds of Africa as an
8 infant and sold to a circus, and has lived in a jail-like,
9 concrete-and-bars cage measuring less than 400 square feet in
10 area for 20 years at Monkey Jungle in Miami, and

11 WHEREAS, except for Monkey Jungle's disastrous and
12 brief attempt to force a female companion upon him a decade
13 ago, King has lived a solitary existence his entire adult
14 life, and

15 WHEREAS, the zoological community has firmly
16 established that companionship is of paramount importance to a
17 gorilla's well-being, and that without it they suffer mentally
18 and psychologically, and

19 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture,
20 which licenses and regulates animal exhibitors, has suggested
21 to Monkey Jungle that King be sent to an appropriate facility
22 where he would have companionship, and

23 WHEREAS, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
24 Commission has established new regulations for cage sizes for
25 various animals, and Monkey Jungle is currently in violation
26 of those regulations with respect to King's inadequate cage,
27 and

28 WHEREAS, every primate expert outside the employ of
29 Monkey Jungle who has been consulted on King's condition,
30 including world-renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall, the
31 American Zoo and Aquarium Association, and the Gorilla Species

1 Survival Plan for North America, has testified that King must
2 be rehabilitated and socialized with gorilla companions or his
3 condition will continue to deteriorate, and

4 WHEREAS, Zoo Atlanta, the premier facility in the world
5 for socializing once-solitary male gorillas at its 4-acre
6 outdoor naturalized gorilla exhibit, has made a standing offer
7 to accept King from Monkey Jungle at any time, and

8 WHEREAS, Monkey Jungle lost its zoo accreditation in
9 1992, and

10 WHEREAS, more than 12,000 petition signatures in the
11 form of individual coupons, originating from four continents,
12 pleading for King's release have been presented to Monkey
13 Jungle with no response, NOW, THEREFORE,

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15 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
16 Florida:

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18 That the House of Representatives of the State of
19 Florida supports and urges the immediate transfer of "King"
20 the gorilla from Monkey Jungle in Miami to Zoo Atlanta, at no
21 expense to Monkey Jungle, in order that he may live out the
22 remainder of his life with family, companions, and dignity.

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