

By Senator Hill

1-246A-05

1   A bill to be entitled

2             An act relating to African-American History and

3             Cultural Heritage Month; authorizing the

4             Governor to annually recognize the month of

5             February as "African-American History and

6             Cultural Heritage Month"; providing an

7             effective date.

8

9             WHEREAS, long ago, approximately 12 million

10            African-American men, women, and children were forced to enter

11            European ships for lives of slavery in the Western Hemisphere,

12            10 million of whom survived the Middle Passage to arrive in

13            America, and

14            WHEREAS, the Civil War erupted because the ideals upon

15            which this country was founded are in direct conflict with

16            slavery, resulting in the ratification of the 13th Amendment,

17            abolishing slavery in the United States of America, and

18            WHEREAS, the civil rights movement of the 20th century

19            began in an effort to correct the failures of Reconstruction

20            and erase the remnants of slavery still evident in Jim Crow

21            laws, in continued segregation in nearly every aspect of daily

22            life, and in the persistence of second-class citizenship for

23            African Americans, and

24            WHEREAS, as a testament of strength throughout these

25            struggles, African Americans such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner

26            Truth, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T.

27            Washington, George Washington Carver, Carter G. Woodson,

28            Malcolm X., Thurgood Marshall, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther

29            King, Jr., Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, and Barbara

30            Jordan have contributed to the political and social growth of

31            American society, and

**CODING:** Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1           WHEREAS, through the contributions of African-American  
2 musicians and writers such as Louis Armstrong, Count Basie,  
3 Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker, Ella  
4 Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Leontyne Price, Marian Anderson,  
5 Andre Watts, Phyllis Wheatley, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin,  
6 Richard Wright, Alex Haley, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker,  
7 Gwendolyn Brooks, and Toni Morrison, the culture of the United  
8 States of America has been vitally enriched, and

9           WHEREAS, African-American sports figures, such as Jesse  
10 Owens, Arthur Ashe, Muhammad Ali, Robert "Bullet Bob" Hayes, a  
11 Florida native who still is the only athlete to earn both an  
12 Olympic Gold Medal and an NFL Super Bowl Ring, Tiger Woods,  
13 Venus Williams, and Serena Williams, have demonstrated their  
14 ability to be role models on and off the field, in and out of  
15 the ring, as they stood up for their rights and beliefs, and

16           WHEREAS, the fields of medicine, science, and  
17 technology have all been advanced by the contributions of such  
18 African-American men and women as Dr. Charles Drew, Dr. Daniel  
19 Hale Williams, Garrett Morgan, George Washington Carver, Dr.  
20 Mae C. Jemison, and Dr. Benjamin Carson, and

21           WHEREAS, African Americans who are native to Florida,  
22 such as Zora Neale Hurston, Charles Kenzie Steele, Sr., Jesse  
23 K. McCrary, Jr., Joseph E. Lee, Asa Philip Randolph, and Mary  
24 McLeod Bethune, have proudly represented our state as they  
25 contributed to the history and culture of the United States of  
26 America, and

27           WHEREAS, it is important to celebrate the many  
28 achievements of African Americans in an effort to offer each  
29 American a broader perspective of our history and an  
30 appreciation for the diversity that makes our country strong,  
31 and

1           WHEREAS, February is the birth month of both Abraham  
2 Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two of the leaders in the  
3 movement to abolish slavery, and has been recognized at the  
4 local, state, and national levels as an appropriate month for  
5 commemoration of African-American contributions to our society  
6 since 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, historian and founder  
7 of the Journal of Negro History, initiated the observance with  
8 Negro History Week, NOW, THEREFORE,

9  
10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

11  
12           Section 1. African-American History and Cultural  
13 Heritage Month.--

14           (1) The month of February of each year is recognized  
15 as African-American History and Cultural Heritage Month.

16           (2) The Governor may issue annually a proclamation  
17 recognizing the month of February as "African-American History  
18 and Cultural Heritage Month" and urging public and private  
19 institutions and organizations to recognize and observe this  
20 month through appropriate programs, meetings, or celebrations.

21           Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a  
22 law.

23  
24           \*\*\*\*\*

25           SENATE SUMMARY

26           Authorizes the Governor to recognize the month of  
27 February each year as "African-American History and  
28 Cultural Heritage Month."  
29  
30  
31