

By Senator Joyner

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing February 2007 as  
"Black History Month" in Florida.

WHEREAS, our nation has celebrated Black History Month during the month of February since 1976, and the theme for this year's celebration is "From Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in the Americas," and

WHEREAS, long ago, approximately 12 million African American men, women, and children were forced to enter ships for lives of slavery in the Western Hemisphere, 10 million of whom survived the Middle Passage to arrive in America, and

WHEREAS, the Civil War erupted because the ideals upon which this country was founded are in direct conflict with slavery, resulting in the ratification of the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States of America, and

WHEREAS, the Civil Rights Movement of the 20th century began in an effort to correct the failures of Reconstruction and erase the remnants of slavery still evident in Jim Crow laws, in continued segregation in nearly every aspect of daily life, and in the persistence of second-class citizenship for African Americans, and

WHEREAS, as a testament of strength throughout these struggles, African Americans such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Carter G. Woodson, Malcolm X., Thurgood Marshall, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, and Barbara Jordan have contributed to the political and social growth of American society, and

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 to  
5 commemorate the contributions of African Americans to our  
6 society since 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, historian and  
7 founder of the Journal of Negro History, initiated the  
8 observance with Negro History Week, NOW, THEREFORE,

9  
10 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

11  
12           That February 2007 is recognized as "Black History  
13 Month" in the State of Florida, and the Florida Senate calls  
14 upon the people of this state to observe Black History Month  
15 through programs, ceremonies, and activities celebrating the  
16 historical and cultural contributions of African Americans.