

By Senator Crist

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## Senate Resolution

A resolution commending the Florida Aquarium's dedication to preserving, protecting, and educating the public about the natural habitats and ecological systems of this state and recognizing April 11, 2007, as "Florida Aquarium Day."

WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium first opened to the public on March 31, 1995, and

WHEREAS, since that day the Florida Aquarium has welcomed more than 7 million visitors and enjoys an annual attendance greater than 600,000, and

WHEREAS, every year more than 100,000 school children visit the Florida Aquarium, many of whom might otherwise never have access to an aquarium facility, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium annually provides continuing education courses in marine sciences for more than 1,000 teachers from across the state which meet the Sunshine State Standards, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium houses 35 permanent exhibits in four main galleries - Wetlands, Bays and Beaches, Coral Reefs, and Sea Hunt - providing a visual and hands-on overview of Florida's ecological systems, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium contains more than 20,000 aquatic plants and animals representing more than 1,800 species, and

WHEREAS, the centerpiece exhibit of the Florida Aquarium is a one-half million gallon Coral Reef Saltwater Exhibit showcasing more than 2,300 fish from 150 species, and

1           WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium is home to successful  
2 rescue and rehabilitation programs for the Florida otter and  
3 sea turtle, and

4           WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium offers summer programs  
5 for students from across the state which are highly successful  
6 and annually sell out, and

7           WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium offers guest dive  
8 experiences called "Swim With Fishes" and "Dive With The  
9 Sharks" 7 days a week, allowing divers to experience the  
10 beauty and majesty of this state's bays and oceans within the  
11 safety and security of the aquarium's tanks, and

12           WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium's exhibits continue to  
13 grow and now include, among others, "Aquarimania! Crazy About  
14 Fish Tanks," which opened in 2006; "Explore A Shore," a  
15 2.2-acre water adventure park for children, and the adjacent  
16 Tampa Tribune Cantina, a sit-down dining experience, both of  
17 which opened in 2004; "Fantasy Island," an outdoor classroom  
18 highlighting the importance of the state's natural habitat,  
19 which opened in 2002; "Invaders! Florida's Most Unwanted  
20 Species" and the Eco Tour Boat "Bay Spirit," both of which  
21 became available to visitors in 2001; "No Boat Zone," a  
22 Pacific touch tank featuring anemones and starfish, which  
23 opened in 2000; and "Dragons Down Under," which opened in  
24 1999, and

25           WHEREAS, in 2006 the Florida Aquarium, in partnership  
26 with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, installed the Tampa Bay Devil  
27 Rays Touch Tank beyond the centerfield wall at Tropicana Field  
28 in St. Petersburg, and

29           WHEREAS, the Florida Aquarium and the Tampa Bay Devil  
30 Rays have joined together again to expand and improve the  
31 Lobby Touch Tank at the Florida Aquarium, and

1           WHEREAS, in the summer of 2006, the Florida Aquarium  
2 began Penguin Promenade, a twice daily guest experience  
3 featuring two African black-footed penguins, Sunny and Sandy,  
4 in a no-borders, no-boundaries, face-to-face experience for  
5 all guests, NOW, THEREFORE,

6  
7 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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9           That the Florida Senate commends the Florida Aquarium  
10 for its dedication to preserving, protecting, and educating  
11 the public about this state's natural habitats and ecological  
12 systems in an exciting, dynamic, and hands-on fashion and  
13 recognizes April 11, 2007, as "Florida Aquarium Day."

14           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution,  
15 with the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to the  
16 Florida Aquarium and to the Chair of the Board of Directors of  
17 the Florida Aquarium as a tangible token of the sentiments of  
18 the Florida Senate.

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