

By Senator Lawson

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Senate Resolution

1 A resolution congratulating the Silver Slipper as it
2 celebrates its 70th Anniversary in 2008 and recognizing
3 April 1, 2008, as "Silver Slipper Day" at the Capitol.
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5
6 WHEREAS, in 1920, Jimmy "Papa" Kalfas, a penniless teenager
7 who could only speak a few words of English, arrived in
8 Tallahassee from Greece to seek his fortune, became manager of
9 the Silver Slipper in 1942, was a partner in the establishment by
10 1944, and became the sole owner in 1947, and

11 WHEREAS, the original Silver Slipper was built in 1938 as a
12 "dine and dance club," and evolved into the place to eat and be
13 merry while discussing the issues facing Florida, and

14 WHEREAS, for 70 years the Silver Slipper has been tied
15 closely to Florida politics and has been a favorite meeting place
16 of governors, legislators, lobbyists, and VIPs from around the
17 state, and

18 WHEREAS, in the first 25 years of the Silver Slipper's
19 operation, Leon County was "dry" or "semi-dry," which meant no
20 hard liquor could be sold, and the Silver Slipper was licensed to
21 sell only beer and wine, and

22 WHEREAS, to circumvent the law, the custom developed at the
23 Silver Slipper and several other Tallahassee eating
24 establishments for patrons to bring their own bottles in a brown
25 paper bag, which worked well for many years until one day in the
26 mid-1950s when law enforcement officers swept through the Silver
27 Slipper and confiscated all hard liquor brought in by
28 legislators, lobbyists, and other patrons, and

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29 WHEREAS, although no arrests were made, legislators were
30 indignant and the first order of business in the Legislature the
31 following day was to enact a law to permit "brown bagging" of
32 liquor, and

33 WHEREAS, in a matter of hours, the bill breezed through both
34 houses, thus ensuring no interruption of imbibing at the Silver
35 Slipper later that night, and

36 WHEREAS, between 1938 and 1974, there were seven additions
37 made to the old Silver Slipper building, but despite the debris
38 and dislocation of construction, the Silver Slipper was never
39 closed for a single day of regular operation, and

40 WHEREAS, during his 27 years as the Silver Slipper's owner,
41 Papa Kalfas devoted his life to the Silver Slipper until the "era
42 of Papa" ended early on the morning of Sunday, February 17, 1974,
43 when the Silver Slipper burned to the ground, and

44 WHEREAS, Papa died shortly after the 1974 fire, but not
45 before he moved the Silver Slipper to temporary quarters in the
46 lower level of the Northwood Mall, and

47 WHEREAS, at the time of his death, Papa was working on plans
48 to build a magnificent new Silver Slipper, but, as it turned out,
49 the Slipper remained at its "temporary" site for another 10 years
50 before the new home of the Silver Slipper was finally built in
51 1984, and

52 WHEREAS, although the building is new, the Kalfas tradition
53 lives on with Chris Kalfas, the eldest of Papa's six children,
54 serving as the controlling partner and general manager and two of
55 Papa's grandchildren, Bill and Jimmy, having key roles in running
56 the Silver Slipper, and

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57 WHEREAS, a great many people have dined at the Silver
58 Slipper over the years, including many distinguished guests and
59 at least four United States presidents, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon
60 B. Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan, NOW, THEREFORE,

61

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

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64 That the Florida Senate congratulates the Silver Slipper as
65 it celebrates its 70th Anniversary in 2008 and recognizes April
66 1, 2008, as "Silver Slipper Day" at the Capitol.

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
68 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to the Kalfas
69 Family, owners of the Silver Slipper, as a tangible token of the
70 sentiments of the Florida Senate.