

By Senator Jones

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## Senate Resolution

1  
2 A resolution recognizing Douglas Donn for his vision and  
3 expertise in thoroughbred track development and his  
4 leadership in many public service organizations in  
5 Florida.

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7 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn's vision and expertise propelled  
8 Gulfstream Park to one of the world's leading thoroughbred tracks  
9 in the United States during his tenure as President and later as  
10 Chairman of Gulfstream from 1978 until 2004, and

11 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn was the youngest chief executive  
12 officer of a major thoroughbred track when at age 31 he assumed  
13 the post at the Hallandale, Florida, track following the untimely  
14 death of his father, Jimmy Donn, Jr., and

15 WHEREAS, under Douglas Donn's leadership, Gulfstream Park  
16 attained exceptional gains in attendance, handle, and purse  
17 distribution in an industry experiencing nationwide declines, and

18 WHEREAS, among the milestones achieved under Douglas Donn's  
19 leadership were the emergence of Gulfstream as one of the world's  
20 foremost racing centers and the winter home of choice for most  
21 Triple Crown aspirants; the hosting of The Breeders' Cup, the  
22 World Championship of Racing, in Florida for the first time at  
23 Gulfstream in 1989, with repeat performances in 1992 and 1999;  
24 and the establishment of the richest racing purse structure in  
25 Florida's history, which attracted many of the nation's leading  
26 owners, trainers, jockeys, and thoroughbreds to Gulfstream, and

27 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn also established the lowest take-out  
28 rate in the State of Florida, ensuring larger payoffs for track  
29 patrons; actively implemented aggressive and innovative

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30 marketing, public relations, customer services, better incentive  
31 programs, and entertainment at Gulfstream; created "Family Days"  
32 every weekend which headlined nationally featured bands, singers,  
33 comedians, and specialty acts for children, resulting in  
34 thousands of additional patrons to Gulfstream; guided Gulfstream  
35 to state pari-mutuel handle records in every category; instituted  
36 full-card simulcasting; developed a precedent-setting agreement  
37 with the Florida Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association  
38 to share pari-mutuels in Florida; and negotiated the annual  
39 telecast of the Florida Derby, nationally recognized as a preview  
40 to the Triple Crown, on ABC's Wide World of Sports, making  
41 Gulfstream the first thoroughbred race track to gain that  
42 distinction, and

43 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn has been honored for his outstanding  
44 contributions to the industry by the Florida Horseman's  
45 Benevolent and Protective Association; has been named "Horseman  
46 of the Year" by the Florida Turf Writers Association and "Man of  
47 the Year" by the Jockey Agents Benevolent Association; and was  
48 also named "Businessman of the Year" in 1984 by the United  
49 Cerebral Palsy Foundation, and

50 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn has provided a wide variety of public  
51 service, including his roles as Member of the Board of Directors  
52 of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Past Chairman of the  
53 Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, Past Chairman of the Broward  
54 Forum, Past Director of the Broward Economic Development Board,  
55 Past Chairman of the Downtown Hollywood Redevelopment Agency,  
56 Past Chairman of the South Area United Way, Past Chairman of the  
57 Hallandale Police Athletic League, and Board Member of the  
58 Hallandale Chamber of Commerce, and

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59 WHEREAS, Douglas Donn graduated from Florida State  
60 University with a degree in Marketing and served a tour of active  
61 duty in the Marine Corps Reserves before beginning his Gulfstream  
62 career, and, with his wife, Alice, is a resident of Ft.  
63 Lauderdale, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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67 That the Senate recognizes the many great contributions  
68 Douglas Donn has made to the progress of thoroughbred racing in  
69 Florida and to the support of essential public service  
70 organizations that have significantly benefited Florida  
71 communities and residents.

72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with  
73 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to Douglas Donn as a  
74 tangible token of the sentiments of the Florida Senate.