

HR 9129

2013

1 House Resolution

2 A resolution commemorating America's First Christmas
3 celebration at the Hernando de Soto Winter Encampment
4 Site in Tallahassee in 1539.

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6 WHEREAS, the Hernando de Soto Winter Encampment Site,
7 located in Tallahassee, is recognized as the location of the
8 first organized Christmas celebration in what would later become
9 the United States, and

10 WHEREAS, the site was the earliest extended occupation by
11 Europeans during the winter season in Florida and is now a
12 small, largely undeveloped state park located on the grounds of
13 the Governor John Martin House, which is currently being
14 considered for nomination as a National Historic Landmark, and

15 WHEREAS, Hernando de Soto and his army spent years
16 exploring the American South, but while many sites are
17 identified with the explorers, their presence has been
18 positively identified only in Tallahassee, and

19 WHEREAS, the late archaeologist B. Calvin Jones located
20 early 16th-century Spanish artifacts while investigating the
21 grounds of the Governor John Martin House, and additional
22 excavations at the site by archaeologist Charles Ewan revealed
23 artifacts, such as coins, pieces of chain mail armor, a tip from
24 a crossbow bolt, distinctive pottery, and pig bones, that are
25 most likely associated with the Hernando de Soto expedition, and

26 WHEREAS, 2013 is the 500th anniversary of European arrival
27 in the continental United States, a significant milestone in
28 Florida's history, and while that history dates back more than

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29 | 12,000 years with the Native Americans, Spain's claim to Florida
30 | in 1513 began a new era, and

31 | WHEREAS, Viva Florida 500 commemorates the story of how
32 | many nationalities and diverse cultures thrived together in
33 | Florida and how their legacy continues to shape America, NOW,
34 | THEREFORE,

35 |

36 | Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of
37 | Florida:

38 |

39 | That the Hernando de Soto Winter Encampment Site in
40 | Tallahassee is recognized as the location of America's First
41 | Christmas celebration in 1539.