

By Senator Hukill

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Senate Resolution

A resolution recognizing the dedicated and inspiring Florida athletes who competed in the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

WHEREAS, on February 21, 2014, The United States Olympic Committee announced the United States Paralympic Team that would compete in the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games, March 7-16, 2014, in Sochi, Russia, and

WHEREAS, the 80-member team, which included six guides for visually impaired athletes, comprised 22 women and 58 men, and

WHEREAS, Team USA's 80 athletes competed throughout the 9 days of Paralympic competition in all five sports: alpine skiing, which includes snowboarding; the biathlon; cross-country skiing; sled hockey; and wheelchair curling, and

WHEREAS, even though the Sunshine State is short on snow and ice, two Floridians, Declan Farmer and Gregory "Greg" Shaw, were among those selected to represent the United States in the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games on the Paralympic Sled Hockey Team, and

WHEREAS, the Paralympic motto is "Spirit in Motion," which captures the inspirational character of the Paralympic movement as well as the elite performance of Paralympic athletes, and

WHEREAS, Declan Farmer was born in Tampa, in Hillsborough County, with proximal femoral focal deficiency, a birth defect that affected his hips and bones in his lower legs resulting in bilateral amputation, and

WHEREAS, Declan Farmer has always had a love of competitive sports, and nothing could slow him down and he began playing

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30 sled hockey in 2006 at a clinic in Clearwater, in Pinellas  
31 County, and

32 WHEREAS, Declan Farmer attends Berkeley Preparatory School  
33 in Tampa, in Hillsborough County, and

34 WHEREAS, Declan Farmer has competed on several squads since  
35 his introduction to the sport: the Tampa Bay Lightning Sled  
36 Hockey Team, from 2007 to 2013; the Spacecoast Hurricanes Youth  
37 Sled Team, in 2011; and the Florida Bandits Sled Hockey Team, in  
38 2012, and

39 WHEREAS, Declan Farmer made his international debut when he  
40 was 15 years old at the 2012 World Sledge Hockey Challenge in  
41 Calgary, Alberta, Canada, where he scored one goal and made four  
42 assists, and

43 WHEREAS, Declan Farmer made his Paralympic debut in 2014 as  
44 the second-youngest member of the United States Paralympic Sled  
45 Hockey Team and proved invaluable to Team USA, ranking second on  
46 the team in points and goals and tying for first in assists  
47 during the 2012-2013 season, and

48 WHEREAS, Greg Shaw was born in Merritt Island, in Brevard  
49 County, with sacral agenesis, a congenital condition that causes  
50 spinal deformity, but this condition has not prevented him from  
51 competing at the highest level of athletics as part of the  
52 United States Paralympic Sled Hockey Team, and

53 WHEREAS, Greg Shaw is a four-time International Paralympic  
54 Committee Ice Sled Hockey World Championship medalist, winning  
55 two gold medals, one silver, and one bronze, and

56 WHEREAS, Greg Shaw first played for the United States  
57 Paralympic Sled Hockey Team during the 2006-2007 season and was  
58 part of the gold medal-winning squad at the 2010 Vancouver

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59 Paralympic Winter Games, scoring two goals and an assist in five  
60 games, and

61 WHEREAS, Greg Shaw plans to enroll at the University of  
62 Central Florida to study computer science, and

63 WHEREAS, Greg Shaw also remains a part of the National  
64 Ability Center family, which he credits for giving him the  
65 support needed to accomplish his goals, and

66 WHEREAS, the 2014 United States Paralympic Sled Hockey Team  
67 became the first team in Paralympic history to win back-to-back  
68 gold medals, and

69 WHEREAS, the residents of Florida stand united in respect  
70 and admiration for our Paralympians and for their athletic  
71 accomplishments, sportsmanship, and dedication during the 2014  
72 Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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76 That the Senate congratulates the members of the United  
77 States Paralympic Team and expresses special gratitude for the  
78 dedication of Florida's participating athletes, Declan Farmer  
79 and Greg Shaw, and to everyone who supported their efforts.