

HR 8023

2017

## House Resolution

1  
2 A resolution recognizing March 28, 2017, as "Florida  
3 Gulf Coast University Day" and commemorating the  
4 university's 20th anniversary.  
5

6 WHEREAS, in May 1991, then-Governor Lawton Chiles signed  
7 into law a bill passed by the Florida Legislature authorizing  
8 the creation of Florida's tenth public university, Florida Gulf  
9 Coast University (FGCU), to provide higher education  
10 opportunities and workforce development in the previously  
11 underserved region of Southwest Florida, and

12 WHEREAS, FGCU opened its doors to students on August 25,  
13 1997, and held its first commencement in May 1998 with 81  
14 graduates, and

15 WHEREAS, in August 2017, FGCU will celebrate its 20th  
16 anniversary, and

17 WHEREAS, during FGCU's first 20 years, it has been led by  
18 three outstanding and dynamic presidents: President Roy  
19 McTarnaghan, President William C. Merwin, and President Wilson  
20 G. Bradshaw, and

21 WHEREAS, FGCU has strategically grown into a regional  
22 university of nearly 15,000 students and today offers 55  
23 undergraduate, 30 graduate, 11 certificate, and 3 doctoral  
24 programs, and

25 WHEREAS, FGCU's top priority is student success, with five

26 colleges providing relevant programs with an accomplished  
27 faculty, small classes, and extensive individualized attention  
28 to help students prepare for successful careers and meet  
29 regional and statewide workforce needs, and

30 WHEREAS, FGCU has achieved national prominence in  
31 academics, environmental sustainability, and student service  
32 learning, with over two million hours contributed to the  
33 Southwest Florida community since 1997, and

34 WHEREAS, FGCU started with land and a grand plan consisting  
35 of 400 acres of restored and preserved wetlands, and

36 WHEREAS, FGCU operates a 15-acre solar field that generates  
37 85 percent of the electric power for three academic buildings,  
38 saving \$700,000 in energy costs annually, and

39 WHEREAS, FGCU emphasizes innovative and interdisciplinary  
40 learning, using the region as a living laboratory while offering  
41 students diverse opportunities to participate in meaningful  
42 research led by their professors, who have conducted more than  
43 \$204.8 million in research and sponsored programs since 1997,  
44 and

45 WHEREAS, FGCU has established the Institute of  
46 Entrepreneurship, bringing engineering and business students  
47 together to develop products and business plans in a real-world  
48 setting, and the Emergent Technologies Institute to provide  
49 learning opportunities that will enhance the university's  
50 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)

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51 education and sustainability initiatives, and

52 WHEREAS, FGCU has one of only 19 PGA-certified golf  
53 management programs in the country and the only certified  
54 program in Florida accepting enrollment of new students, and

55 WHEREAS, FGCU is a leader in the State University System of  
56 this state, with approximately 75 percent of alumni employed or  
57 continuing their education within one year after graduation, and

58 WHEREAS, FGCU focuses on college affordability for all  
59 students by maintaining its commitment to cost containment,  
60 holding tuition at the same level for four years, and

61 WHEREAS, FGCU serves as a cultural hub for the region,  
62 offering a wealth of enrichment opportunities that include the  
63 visual arts, music, theater, and public radio and television,  
64 and

65 WHEREAS, FGCU's athletics programs continue to be a growing  
66 source of pride for their loyal fans, earning 56 league titles  
67 in the past 9 years and making 25 NCAA Tournament appearances in  
68 the previous five seasons, and

69 WHEREAS, FGCU has had a total of 9 student athletes who  
70 have advanced to professional teams, and

71 WHEREAS, FGCU experienced international exposure at the  
72 2016 Summer Olympic Games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with  
73 beach volleyball player, Brooke Youngquist Sweat, 2008 alumna,  
74 representing the United States, joining two FGCU alumnae  
75 swimmers, Lani Cabrera, 2016 alumna, and Evita Leter, 2017

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76 alumna, and

77 WHEREAS, FGCU student athletes continue to demonstrate  
78 their academic strengths by earning an overall grade point  
79 average of 3.24, which has led the university's student body  
80 statistics for 15 consecutive semesters, and

81 WHEREAS, the collegiate experience continues to enrich the  
82 lives of FGCU students through the "FGCU Effect" and the  
83 university's longstanding commitment to promoting racial,  
84 ethnic, and cultural diversity on campus, NOW, THEREFORE,

85

86 Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of  
87 Florida:

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89 That March 28, 2017, is recognized as "Florida Gulf Coast  
90 University Day" in Florida, and that Florida Gulf Coast  
91 University is celebrated for its 20th anniversary as an  
92 outstanding institution of higher education focused on student  
93 success.

94 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be  
95 presented to Wilson G. Bradshaw, Ph.D., president of Florida  
96 Gulf Coast University, as a tangible token of the sentiments  
97 expressed herein.