

By Senator Perry

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1 Senate Resolution

2 A resolution commending the University of Florida for
3 its continued achievements in the pursuit of academic
4 and research excellence and recognizing April 8, 2021,
5 as "Gator Day" at the Capitol.
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7 WHEREAS, the University of Florida is a top 10 public
8 university in the United States, rising from No. 7 in 2020 to
9 No. 6 in the 2021 *U.S. News & World Report* list of Best Public
10 Universities, and

11 WHEREAS, the University of Florida continues its upward
12 momentum, with 12 colleges and 61 graduate programs ranked in
13 the top 25 nationally among the country's public universities,
14 including 13 programs ranked in the top 10, according to the
15 2022 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Graduate Schools rankings,
16 and

17 WHEREAS, the University of Florida's research spending
18 reached a record \$942.2 million in 2020, and the university's
19 work continues to yield huge returns for this state, among them
20 advances, discoveries, and inventions that address the most
21 pressing needs of our time, and

22 WHEREAS, the University of Florida has 28 faculty members
23 who are members of the National Academies of Sciences,
24 Engineering, and Medicine, and

25 WHEREAS, through a groundbreaking partnership with leading
26 technology company NVIDIA, the University of Florida now has the
27 most powerful artificial intelligence computer in higher
28 education, and the university is pursuing a strategy to become a
29 world leader in AI education, research, and workforce

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30 development, uniquely positioning the state of Florida as a
31 destination for AI-related industries, and

32 WHEREAS, UF Health researchers and clinicians, faced with a
33 year of unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19
34 pandemic, fought this deadly disease on numerous fronts, from
35 successfully treating thousands of patients across this state
36 and nation to developing breakthrough treatments, such as a lung
37 pacemaker to help severely sick patients breathe, and

38 WHEREAS, UF Health researchers and clinicians performed
39 numerous lung transplants on COVID-19 patients whose lungs were
40 too compromised by the virus to be viable, while other
41 researchers unlocked the mysteries of COVID-19 in labs and led
42 the way in community testing, and

43 WHEREAS, the University of Florida continues to welcome
44 Gators through the UF Online pathway, with more than 4,500
45 active students earning their UF baccalaureate degrees on the
46 pathway, in addition to the more than 3,000 who have already
47 graduated through UF Online, and

48 WHEREAS, UF Online is now the No. 3 online bachelor's
49 program in the nation, as ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* in
50 2021, and is the No. 2 online bachelor's program in the nation
51 for veterans, accomplishments achieved while keeping college
52 affordable and saving Florida residents more than \$22 million in
53 tuition and fees since 2014, and

54 WHEREAS, the University of Florida athletic program has
55 ranked among the nation's top 10 for 36 consecutive years – from
56 1983-1984 to 2018-2019 – and has attained a top 5 overall finish
57 in each of the last 11 years, according to national all-sports
58 rankings, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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62 That the University of Florida is commended for its
63 continued achievements in the pursuit of academic and research
64 excellence and that April 8, 2021, is recognized as "Gator Day"
65 at the Capitol.

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution, with
67 the Seal of the Senate affixed, be presented to University of
68 Florida President W. Kent Fuchs, Ph.D., as a tangible token of
69 the sentiments of the Florida Senate.